FRIDAY
March 27, 2026

BENGALURU
CITY EDITION
20 Pages ₹ 6.00

THE HINDU

www.thehindu.com

INDIA'S NATIONAL NEWSPAPER SINCE 1878

Vol. 57 • No. 73

RNI No. KARENG/1970/49945

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Jaishankar in France for G7, partners meet

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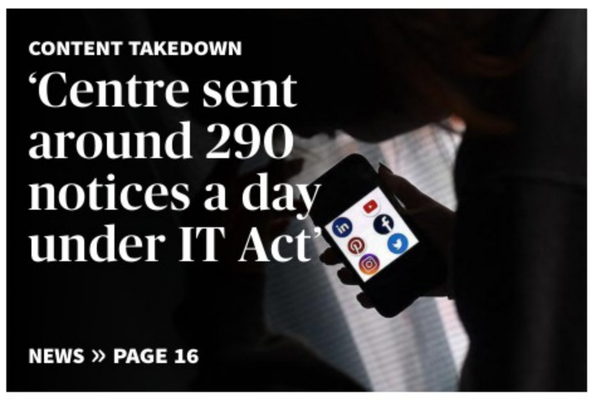

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Examining the need for a formal law for fathers

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60-day relaxation in age for Class 1 admissions

BENGALURU
Following pressure from parents, the government on Thursday announced a 60-day relaxation in the age eligibility criteria for class 1 admissions for the 2026–27 academic year.

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Special Cabinet meet on internal quota deferred

BENGALURU
The Special Cabinet meeting to iron out differences over internal reservation among 101 Scheduled Castes, which was to be held on Friday, has been postponed to beyond April 9.

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Iran grants Hormuz passage to India and 4 other nations

Ships of India, China, Russia, Iraq, and Pak. can pass through the Strait, says Iran Foreign Minister, who thanks India, Sri Lanka for 'significant help'; 'sovereignty' established over waterway, he adds

Stanly Johny

India and four other "friendly nations" were allowed to move their ships through the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi has said, adding that Tehran has established its "sovereignty" over the waterway connecting the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman.

He also thanked India and Sri Lanka for their "significant help" after an Iranian vessel, *IRIS Dena*, was sunk in a U.S. attack in the Indian Ocean during the conflict and said no talks were being held with Washington.

"We permitted passage through the Strait of Hormuz for friendly nations including China, Russia, India, Iraq, and Pakistan," Mr. Araghchi said in an interview with the Iran News Network that was broadcast on Wednesday night.

"The Strait of Hormuz is located in the territorial waters of Iran and Oman, and Iran's sovereignty is established there. After the war, we will also have new arrangements for passing through the Strait," he said. "In the incident of the *Dena* ship, which was unfairly attacked without any warning, I must thank Sri Lanka and India for their significant help in transferring two other ships to a safe location," he added.

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AT AN IMPASSE
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Tanker *Apollo Ocean* unload cargo collected from vessel *Shivalik* in Mangaluru on Thursday. *Shivalik* is one of four Indian ships which crossed the Strait of Hormuz recently. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

One month of LPG supplies secured: Centre

NEW DELHI
Amid a reduction in India's reliance on imports of liquefied petroleum gas and increased production, one month of supplies have been arranged through imports with constant procurement ongoing, the Centre has said .

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India mulls trade in West Asia with local currencies

NEW DELHI
The Centre is "experimenting" with conducting trade with West Asian countries in local currencies in a bid to mitigate surging oil prices and depreciating rupee.

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Bus catches fire after crash in A.P.; 14 killed

Highway inferno: Smoke and flames seen at the accident site in Markapuram district of Andhra Pradesh on Thursday. PTI

Sambasiva Rao M.
MARKAPURAM

Fourteen people were charred to death when the private bus they were travelling in collided with a tipper lorry, after allegedly veering onto the wrong side of the road, and caught fire near Rayavaram in Andhra Pradesh's Markapuram district in the early hours of Thursday. A five-month-old boy and six women were among the dead. The accident also left 28 people injured, with five in critical condition.

The bus, belonging to Harikrishna Travels, was on its way to Vinjamur in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh from Nirmal in neighbouring Telangana with 42 passengers.

While officials say the bus, driven by its owner Harikrishna, was travelling at a high speed, the driver told the police that his steering wheel was jammed.

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COURAGE AMID FLAMES
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Speaker's fiat to govt. after MLAs clamour for IPL tickets

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

With the Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket matches beginning on March 28 at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium here, Legislative Assembly Speaker U.T. Khader has asked the State government to ensure that each MLA is allotted four premium tickets for the match days, following complaints from members across party lines against the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA).

The issue was raised by Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok on Thursday during a debate on Bengaluru's development. He pointed out that the government had leased 16.32 acres for the stadium at a nominal rent, and yet, MLAs struggle to obtain even one ticket.

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Fasten your seatbelts as the IPL roller-coaster ride is here!

The magical number of 300 hasn't yet been attained in the tournament, but only a brave man will assert that it won't be threatened, or surpassed, this time around

AP & SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

R. Kaushik

It hasn't been even three weeks since India were crowned T20 World Cup champions for an unprecedented third time, though it does seem like an eternity. It's not often that India's players go this long without being seen in competitive action of some kind or the other. But worry not. Season 19 of the Indian Premier League is imminent, with the opening fixture slated for Saturday.

The lead-up to IPL 2026 has been unusually frenetic. First hung giant question marks over whether the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium would get the nod to retain its status as the home base of Royal Challengers Bengaluru, the reigning champions. RCB's victory over Punjab Kings in the June 3 final in Ahmedabad last year was followed by an unspeakable tragedy outside the Chinnaswamy the following evening. What was meant to be a celebratory parade turned into catastrophe as 11 fans lost their lives in a stampede. Tens of thousands gathered outside the stadium, trying to partake of a slice of history; the evening ended in tears and untold grief, the title triumph a distant memory as the horrific events hit home and an entire city was engulfed in agony and despair.

The new dispensation at the Karnataka State Cricket Association, helmed by former India pacer Venkatesh Prasad, has worked tirelessly to secure necessary permissions from the State government after meeting the short-term goals outlined by a one-man commission appointed by the government to probe the disaster. Long-term requirements will be addressed once the IPL is done with; RCB's passionate fans, who snapped up tickets for the opener against Sunrisers Hyderabad within four minutes of the start of the exclusively online sale on Tuesday, will, however, get to see their stars in action for only five of the seven designated home games, with the franchise management having earlier inked an arrangement with Chhattisgarh to play two home fixtures in Raipur.

RCB and Rajasthan Royals, the inaugural winners in 2008, will be under new managements for IPL 2027 even though both teams officially wrapped up negotiations with interested parties in the last few days. The change in ownership should technically have no bearing on how events unfold on the field over the next two months, though there have been murmurs over the timing of the completion of the process this close to the start of the tournament.

Like always, the build-up has been characterised by a slew of withdrawals and delayed entries, most of them involving overseas fast bowlers. There has been one unforced late withdrawal in the form of Ben Duckett, the England Test opener who was part of the T20 World Cup side without getting a game. The left-hander has told the Delhi Capitals management that he would like to concentrate on getting among red-ball runs ahead of the international season after a disastrous time at the Ashes in Australia over the winter. Why he chose to wait this long before baring his hand is the big question; like his white-ball captain Harry Brook last season, Duckett will be banned from the IPL for a couple of years, an eventuality that doesn't seem to have prevented him from making his eleventh-hour call.

Injury woes

Among those missing in action this year will be England all-rounder Sam Curran, who picked up a groin injury during the T20 World Cup, and Nathan Ellis, the Australian pacer out with a severe hamstring injury. Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings have already snapped up replacements, Dasun Shanaka and Spencer Johnson respectively, both recruited from the Pakistan Super League which began on Thursday.

The venerated Australian pace trio of Test and One-Day International captain Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood will miss the early part of the competition. Cummins hasn't played competitively since the third Ashes Test in Adelaide in mid-December, laid low by a back injury that prevented him from playing the T20 World Cup. The SRH captain has linked up with his team in Bengaluru but will continue his return-to-play protocol as the 2016 champions begin their campaign under stand-in skipper Ishan Kishan. The left-handed Jharkhandi's elevation to the captaincy in only his second season with the franchise, if only on a temporary basis, comes on the back of his inspirational leadership that carried his State to the T20 Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy last year, and following a wonderful run at the World Cup that helped him finish as India's second highest run-scorer in the tournament, behind Sanju Samson. Kishan at the helm means at least at the start of the tournament, all 10 teams will be led by Indians.

Samson-Jadeja switch

Samson, meanwhile, is one of many high-profile names to have ended long-standing associations with a franchise to move to a different outfit. Having represented Rajasthan Royals for 11 seasons (2013-2015 and 2018-2025, the franchise was suspended in 2016 and 2017), he was traded out to Chennai Super Kings in the closed season. The five-time former champions were compelled to release Curran, now unavailable, and Ravindra Jadeja, who briefly led CSK in 2022, to Rajasthan. For Jadeja, it will be a homecoming of sorts; he shot to prominence in the inaugural season when unfancied Rajasthan went all the way under the charismatic, tactically astute Shane Warne, who anointed Jadeja a 'Rockstar'. The late Warne must be delighted at the strides Jadeja has taken in the sport, and his current standing as one of India's most solid Test batters, a welcome development after the Test side lost two of its most experienced names in Rohit Sharma and his predecessor as captain, Virat Kohli.

Onus on RoKo

Rohit and Kohli will be the cynosure for obvious reasons. Retired internationally from the five-day game and the hustle and bustle of the 20-over format, they only play for the country in 50-over cricket. Both played their last representative games on January 18, in the last of three ODIs against New Zealand in Indore; Rohit was dismissed for 11 but Kohli smashed 124, his 54th ton in that version taking him to 85 international centuries. Rohit, who will turn 39 midway through the IPL, is looking the fittest he has been in a long time while Kohli's dedication to taking care of his body is as legendary as his attention to detail when it comes to batting. Alongside Mahendra Singh Dhoni, they will remain the poster boys of IPL 2026, never mind the grand successes enjoyed in recent times by T20I World Cup-winning skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Samson, Kishan, Abhishek Sharma, Hardik Pandya, Tilak Varma and the magical Jasprit Bumrah.

For the early part of the tournament, Bumrah will have to keep the flag of fast bowling flying high. Starc, who was such a key performer for Delhi Capitals last season, is waiting for Cricket Australia's nod so that he can link up with his colleagues – he doesn't have an injury problem as such – while Hazlewood's return from injury, too, is being closely monitored by his country's cricket board. With 22 wickets, Hazlewood was one of the undisputed stars for RCB, who ended a 17-year wait for a title last year. As if Hazlewood's unavailability during the initial stages wasn't bad enough, RCB will have to do without the services of left-arm swing bowler Yash Dayal, battling personal issues, for the entire season. Despite his troubles, the Uttar Pradesh pacer was retained by the franchise in what Mo Bobat, director of cricket, said was a show of support. Perhaps anticipating that Dayal might not be available, RCB made a couple of shrewd like-for-like purchases at the Abu Dhabi auction, but there is no denying the fact that they will be the poorer for Dayal's absence.

The differently prepared pitches at the World Cup did not facilitate unfettered ball-bashing, and that's what the bowlers will be hoping is the case at the IPL too. Before the tournament began last month, expectations of 300 being breached were huge; as it turned out, India's 256 for four against Zimbabwe in Chennai in the Super Eights turned out to be the highest score of the World Cup. Now, 300 is again being spoken of in hushed tones. The magical number hasn't yet been attained in the IPL, but only a brave man will assert that it won't be threatened, or surpassed, this time around.

One of the more frequently used cliches in 20-over cricket is that while matches can't be won in the PowerPlay, they can certainly be lost in that first chunk of six overs. That might be the general truth, but when a team clatters to 92 without loss in the PowerPlay, like India did in the World Cup final against a shell-shocked New Zealand, the result is pretty much a foregone conclusion with 85% of the match still to be played. India's battering rams on that occasion were Abhishek, who shed a horrible trot with an 18-ball fifty, and Samson. There are numerous such bruising pairs in the IPL, foremost among them Abhishek and Travis Head for SRH and another all-left combine, Yashasvi Jaiswal and Vaibhav Suryavanshi for RR.

From strength to strength

Since his sensational debut as a 14-year-old last season when he smashed the second-fastest IPL century ever (35 balls), Suryavanshi has gone from strength to strength. The *piece de resistance* was at the under-19 World Cup final against England in Harare last month, when he smashed 175 off just 80 balls and reduced the title clash to one-way traffic. Even at this tender age, Suryavanshi is well aware that the novelty factor has worn off, that teams have a better understanding of how to bowl to him, and that the second season when a player is a marked individual is a far more daunting proposition than the first. Suryavanshi turns 15 today (March 27), which makes him eligible to represent the senior Indian team. To play for the country is his dream, like it is for anyone who embraces any sport; the next few weeks will provide a greater understanding of the strides the man-child has made in the 12 months since he exploded into public consciousness with his mesmeric century against Gujarat Titans.

So much to look forward to, as ever. As the tournament progresses, there might appear to be a touch of sameness to the matches, but there will be no dimming of intensity from the players or interest from the fans. The annual showstopper is here; strap in for a roller-coaster ride like no other.

THE GIST

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- One of the more frequently used cliches in 20-over cricket is that while matches can't be won in the PowerPlay, they can certainly be lost in that first chunk of six overs
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From Page One

Speaker's fiat to govt. after MLAs clamour for IPL tickets

"They make us beg for tickets. When available, they cost as much as ₹20,000," Mr. Ashok said, alleging that the association was earning substantial revenue.

Supporting the demand, Congress member Vijayananda Kashappanavar sought at least five tickets for each MLA, and called for better seating arrangements, including a dedicated lounge. He urged that MLAs be provided tickets for the IPL opener between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Excise licence

Mr. Ashok questioned the grant of an excise licence to the KSCA, suggesting that stricter regulation could address the issue. BJP member Abhay Patil demanded an inquiry into alleged black marketing of tickets, claiming that even MLAs were unable to purchase them.

Members also complained of being given "ordinary tickets" and not being recognised at the venue.

Responding to the concerns, Mr. Khader directed Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar to take up the matter with the KSCA, and ensure that each MLA received a minimum of four VIP tickets.

Mr. Shivakumar said he would speak to KSCA president B.K. Venkatesh Prasad, and added that there was nothing wrong in legislators seeking such perks.

INBRIEF

No need to beg for cricket tickets, says Horatti

Legislative Council Chairman Basavaraj Horatti on Thursday said legislators need not "beg for cricket match tickets", amid concerns raised over limited passes for the upcoming IPL match.

The issue was raised by JD(S) member T.A. Sharavana, who pointed out that Council members had been allotted only one pass each and sought at least two. Mr. Horatti said legislators should not have to depend on such allocations. "If we want, we can pay and buy tickets. There is no need to beg for them," he remarked.

He asked Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil to take up the matter with the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) and the Home Department. When Mr. Patil promised that he would speak to the authorities concerned, the Chairman said the issue went beyond match tickets. "This is not just about cricket tickets. Legislators need to be respected," he added.

In a first, multi-layered security, holding areas at Chinnaswamy stadium

State Expert Committee overseeing the overhaul of the stadium conducted a final drill and formally announced that the venue has undergone all upgrades satisfactorily

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

If you are planning to visit M. Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday for the inaugural match without a ticket, you must drop the idea.

The Bengaluru City Police will deploy seven squads, each comprising 15 police officers, around the stadium to clear the area and disperse gatherings.

Seemant Kumar Singh, Commissioner of Police, said the teams will conduct foot patrols and will not allow anyone without a ticket to loiter around the stadium. Those creating problems will face strict action. "Nearly 2,000 officers will be deployed for the stadium bandobast and crowd management. The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the State will be strictly followed," Mr. Singh said at the stadium.

On Thursday, the State Expert Committee overseeing the overhaul of the stadium conducted a final drill and formally announced that the venue had undergone all upgrades satisfactorily.

The police have urged spectators to check their gate numbers before the match and exit the metro stations accordingly.

Those entering through gates along Link Road are advised to disembark at M.G. Road station, while those with entry through Cubbon Road gates can deboard at Cubbon Park station.

Ready for fiesta: The M. Chinnaswamy Stadium all set to host the inaugural IPL 2026 match between Royal Challengers Bengaluru and Sunrisers Hyderabad on Saturday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Tight security: The Bengaluru City Police will deploy seven squads around the stadium. K. MURALI KUMAR

"Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) members and spectators in the 'F' Stand and 'H' Upper Stand should preferably deboard at M.G. Road station and then enter the stadium," a senior officer said.

Even VIPs attending matches are encouraged to use metro services or park their vehicles at designated locations. Strict no-parking restrictions will be enforced around the stadium.

Based on the expert committee's recommendations, the KSCA has introduced the concept of holding areas on the stadium premises for the first time. The stadium will have two layers of gates. At the first gate, security personnel will conduct soft checks, including quick ticket verification, authenticity checks, and confirmation of the correct gate number.

From there, spectators will move to designated holding areas.

Nine holding areas have been created, with the KSCA 'B' Ground accommodating up to 5,000 spectators at a time. The tennis grounds and the entire Link Road have also been converted into holding areas.

After this phase, spectators will be seamlessly guided to turnstile gates, where physical frisking and metal detection checks will be conducted. At this stage, spectators will scan their mobile tickets before heading to their respective stands.

Correct entry: The police have urged spectators to check their gate numbers and exit the metro stations accordingly. K. MURALI KUMAR

Traffic arrangements in place for matches

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In view of the Indian Premier League (IPL) matches on March 28 and April 5, at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium, the police have announced comprehensive traffic and parking arrangements to ensure smooth vehicular movement across the city.

Parking will be prohibited on several key roads surrounding the stadium. These include both sides of Queen's Road from Balekundri Circle to Queen's Circle and up to CTO junction, and along M.G. Road between Anil Kumble Circle and Queen's Circle.

Restrictions are also in place on Link Road, Raj Bhavan Road, T. Chowdiah Road, Race Course Road, and Central Street.

Additionally, parking will not be permitted along Cubbon Road, St. Mark's Road, Museum Road, Kasturba Road, and Vittal Mallya Road.

Inside Cubbon Park, parking is strictly banned at King's Road, near the Press Club, Bal Bhavan, and Fountain Road.

Parking facilities

Spectators are advised to use designated parking areas, including grounds at St. Joseph's Indian High School and St. Joseph's European School, Freedom Park multi-level parking, Garuda Mall, Shivajinagar Bus Stand (first floor), and UB City Mall.

Entry to the stadium will be facilitated through Gates E-1 to E-3, and E-18, E-19, E-22, and E-23 located on Cubbon Road.

Gates E-11 to E-17 on Link Road can be accessed via Anil Kumble Circle and B.R.V. Circle.

Gates E-05 and E-08 on Queen's Road are designated for entry, while exit is restricted to Gates E-09 and E-9A.

Gate E-10 on Queen's Road is reserved exclusively for players, support staff, officials, and VIPs.

Pick-up points

Dedicated pick-up and drop-off points for app-based cabs and autos have been arranged at B.R.V. Ground (near Gate No. 06), and Manekshaw Parade Grounds (near Gate No. 03).

Police officials have urged people to make maximum use of public transport services, including BMTC buses and the Namma Metro, to avoid congestion and ensure hassle-free travel during match days.

Police complaints authority seeks crackdown on vehicles causing noise pollution

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Karnataka State Police Complaints Authority (KSPCA) has urged the police to initiate strict and continuous action against vehicles fitted with illegal modified silencers and loud horns, citing rising cases of noise and environmental pollution.

In a communication addressed to the Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG & IGP), member Mohan Kumar Danappa highlighted the increasing nuisance caused by two-wheelers and other vehicles using prohibited or defective silencers, particularly in Bengaluru and other urban areas.

A file photo of modified silencers fitted to vehicles, which had been seized by the traffic police, being crushed in Mysuru.

The authority noted that such vehicles generate excessive noise and smoke, contributing to both sound and air pollution. Riders, often speeding on city roads, state highways, and national highways, deliberately use modified silencers to draw attention, causing disturbance to other motorists and pedestrians.

The issue has reportedly spread across residential areas, including streets near schools, colleges, hospitals, courts, and places of worship. The letter warned that continuous exposure to such high-decibel noise could lead to serious health concerns, including hearing impairment in infants, increased heart rate, mental stress, and complications for pregnant women, the elderly, and individuals with heart conditions.

It also pointed out that incidents of assault and verbal abuse have been reported when residents question offenders, especially during late evening and night hours when such activities peak.

The authority further observed that despite being aware of such violations, police personnel in some jurisdictions have allegedly failed to take adequate action, drawing criticism from the public.

Calling for urgent intervention, the authority has recommended that all police stations across the state conduct special drives to seize vehicles with illegal silencers and initiate legal action under relevant provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, including Sections 52, 53, and 182A.

The city traffic police have undertaken a special drive targeting vehicles fitted with shrill horns, tampered silencers, and dazzling lights, which cause inconvenience to other motorists and also violate provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act.

Officials said the drive aims to curb noise pollution and enhance road safety, as such illegal modifications disturb people and increase the risk of accidents.

Timings
BENGALURU

FRIDAY, MAR. 27	
RISE 06:19	SET 18:31
RISE 13:34	SET 01:56
SATURDAY, MAR. 28	
RISE 06:19	SET 18:31
RISE 14:33	SET 02:48
SUNDAY, MAR. 29	
RISE 06:18	SET 18:31
RISE 15:29	SET 03:35

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	30	20
Mysuru	34	19
Bengaluru	33	21

Bengaluru Today
33°C The weather will be dry. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
33°C Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm. Night will be pleasant. Dry weather to occur.

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THE HINDU
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East, Central corporations to present their first annual budgets today

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

In the first major step towards shaping the newly formed city corporations following the dissolution of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike, the Bengaluru City East and the Central Corporations will present their annual budgets on Friday.

The remaining three corporations in the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) area will present their budgets on Saturday.

"It serves as one of the indicators to assess the success or failure of the new administrative structure," a GBA official said.

According to sources in the corporations, all of them have envisioned improving revenue by strengthening and expanding income sources. "One of the major measures is strengthening the property tax collection system. While many of the corporations have already begun the process, they will devise new methods," a GBA official said.

The presentation of the budgets will be the first major step towards shaping the newly formed city corporations following the dissolution of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike. FILE PHOTO

When the budget is presented by the East Corporation at 9.30 a.m. on Friday, residents will closely watch the allocation and planning for addressing the garbage issue. Even during the "Meet the Chief Commissioner" programme, the East City Corporation residents flagged garbage as a major concern.

Besides, the corporation is in need of infrastructure development, as many road projects, especially beyond the Outer Ring Road (ORR), have remained on paper for the last few years within its jurisdiction. In addition, the Commissioner will also have the onus of allocating a substantial sum towards the development of areas and infrastructure around the ORR.

Sources in the East City Corporation say that they have adopted a balanced approach, focusing on infrastructure upgrades.

For the Central Corporation, the priorities are no different. Lake upgradation and the revamp of historic markets are on the cards. The major challenge for the corporation is addressing congestion issues, for which road upgradation has already been taken up. Further, the corporation has successfully implemented a paid parking system on M.G. Road and is likely to announce its expansion.

Minor detained for stabbing woman and her brother to death

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A 16-year-old boy allegedly stabbed a woman and her brother to death following a dispute linked to an alleged extramarital relationship in northwest Bengaluru on Thursday.

The victims have been identified as Yamuna, 36, her younger brother Sudeep, 34. The accused is the minor son of a woman with whom Yamuna's husband, Malle Gowda, was reportedly in a relationship.

According to a complaint filed by Mr. Gowda, he had earlier lent ₹2 lakh to the woman, which she repaid recently.

However, suspicion and frequent quarrels persisted within his family over his alleged relationship with her.

About three months ago, both families had a confrontation, which was later settled, and a complaint was also lodged at the Byadarahalli police station in January.

The incident occured following a dispute linked to an alleged extramarital relationship.
GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

On the morning of March 26, Yamuna reportedly left home along with her brother Sudeep to confront the woman at her residence near Peenya. The police said a heated argument broke out between the two sides.

During the altercation, the woman's 16-year-old son allegedly attacked Yamuna and Sudeep with a knife. Both victims succumbed to their injuries on the spot.

Mr. Gowda, who rushed to the scene after receiving a call, found the bodies lying in a pool of blood inside the house.

The police have registered a case of murder and have detained the minor.

Meanwhile, Mr. Gowda's 18-year-old son alleged that the accused had deliberately called his mother and uncle to the house with the intention of attacking them.

"A month ago, we had filed a complaint after learning about my father's relationship with the woman. My mother had also confronted her earlier," he said.

Why do we need a living will?

Failing to plan ahead is often what separates a peaceful, dignified passing from a prolonged and distressing ordeal for the patient and their family; a living will might be all that humans have available to speak on our behalf when we no longer have a voice, in a life filled with unpredictability

Rajeev Jayadevan

Birth and death represent the two ends of a person's timeline. A disproportionate amount of preparation, attention and care is given to the first half – ranging from the anticipation of pregnancy, counselling and check-ups, to delivery and extravagant first birthday celebrations. Unfortunately, the same attention is rarely given to the opposite end – that is death. It is often left to chance, fuelled by the vague hope that 'the right treatment decision will somehow be taken at the right time by someone.'

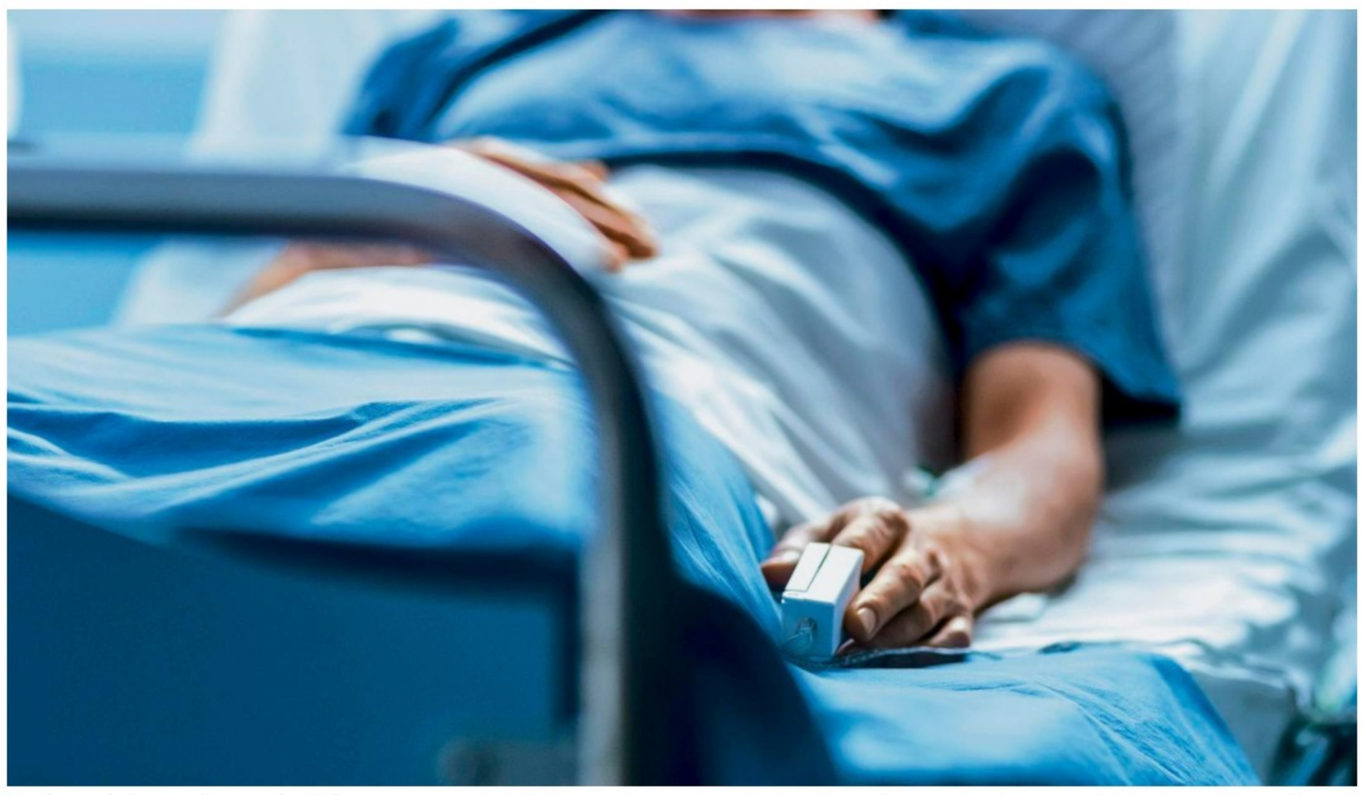
Therein lies the problem. No one – not even a doctor – knows exactly how their life will end, or whether they will be able to speak for themselves in their final days. It could be a relatively sudden event or a long-drawn-out process following a severe, irreversible illness. That choice isn't ours to make. Ultimately, failing to plan ahead is often what separates a peaceful, dignified passing from a prolonged and distressing ordeal for the patient and their family.

A living will is a legal document that safeguards the individual's treatment preferences for certain irreversible conditions, essentially taking the burden off relatives and doctors in deciding on treatments in specific situations. Not having one could sometimes lead to crucial treatment decisions that the patient would not have made by themselves, needlessly prolonging their suffering.

The focus of a living will is specifically for situations in which the person develops a medical condition that is terminal or irreversible. There will be no compromise in routine treatment measures for other illnesses. For instance, a college lecturer suffers a brain injury from hypoxia after a near-drowning incident in a river. The person is paralysed, opens their eyes but cannot recognise anyone or respond – a condition commonly referred to as a persistent vegetative state. This could also happen following head injury, choking on food, strangulation or a stroke.

In such situations, not only is recovery not generally possible, but the person may remain in that condition for prolonged periods – painful for the family to watch and also expensive in the long run. Another example is a person with metastatic cancer at a stage where further treatment offers no improvement, where the person may be better off receiving comfort care (palliative care) than remaining in the ICU receiving more rounds of chemotherapy that only diminish quality of life in the limited days that remain.

Most people would expect their family members or close friends to step in and take the right decisions along with the doctors. However, in reality, the situation can turn chaotic because of emotional conflict, guilt, differences of opinion and contrasting attitudes among several decision-makers – at the end of which doctors will often take the safest route possible: continuing every treatment measure prescribed in the books, without consideration for quality of life or prospects for recovery. In addition, our next of kin may not be alive or available to make these decisions for us in the distant future. A safer alternative is for individuals to document their preferences ahead of time, when they are still in good physical and mental health, and also discuss it in advance with family members so that there is no conflict if and when the time comes.



The focus of a living will is specifically for situations in which the person develops a medical condition that is terminal or irreversible. Without a living will, many terminally ill patients spend their final days in the ICU, attached to numerous tubes, unable to speak, and cared for by strangers. GETTY IMAGES

The living will does not need to be invoked for everyone who is dying, especially when the person is still able to discuss their wishes with their doctors. The danger of not preparing one is that sometimes, other people may end up making life-changing decisions on our behalf when we are not in a position to indicate our preferences.

For instance, if a person enters an irreversible persistent vegetative state, doctors may place a feeding tube that pierces the stomach wall–because the patient can no longer swallow. Such individuals can remain in a paralysed, bedridden state for several years, sometimes a decade or longer. This may not be what the person would have wanted. In contrast, if this person had previously made a living will (advance directive) stating they did not want artificial feeding in the event of an irreversible illness, the treatment plan could shift to comfort care. This gives the person a chance to pass away gradually, in peace, and surrounded by loved ones.

The Supreme Court legally recognised these "advance directives" in the *Common Cause vs. Union of India (2018)* case. More recently, in the case of Harish Rana – where no living will existed – the Supreme Court enabled doctors to stop artificial feeding by classifying it as a treatment measure, while continuing comfort care until a natural death occurred.

Without a living will, many terminally ill patients spend their final days in the ICU, attached to numerous tubes, unable to speak, and cared for by strangers. This "disconnected" mode of dying not only results in poor quality of life for the patient but also causes profound emotional distress for the family left behind.

Clarity on treatments

A living will typically specifies which life-sustaining treatments to withhold or withdraw – such as ventilators, feeding tubes, or CPR – only if the patient has no hope of recovery. It does not apply to routine hospitalisations, surgeries, or the treatment of common illnesses. For example, a person with metastatic cancer who has written a living will to avoid ICU care and artificial feeding for their underlying terminal illness will still receive full treatment for a limb fracture or appendicitis. In such cases, if they are temporarily unable to eat, they will receive artificial feeding and post-operative ICU care just like any other patient – to help them recover.

Artificial feeding is a life-saving tool for reversible conditions; it only becomes a point of concern when used to indefinitely prolong a state of irreversible suffering.

Studies have shown that having a living will does not affect total survival. At the same time, it helps reduce unnecessary medical interventions and expenses.

Discussing one's preferences with close relatives and the family doctor is helpful to receive guidance and clarity while planning a living will. Guidelines for EOLC (End Of Life Care) by The Indian Association of Critical Care Medicine and the Indian Association of Palliative Care have been published. Templates available online can be customised – as each individual may have different viewpoints for end of life care.

For instance, one person may not want any form of artificial feeding if an irreversible illness is confirmed – that is, if they become unable to swallow or feed themselves. Others may agree to artificial feeding, but may not want to be attached to a ventilator if their breathing becomes weak. A third person may agree to ventilator care but will not want CPR, and a fourth may want everything possible to be done. Patient autonomy dictates that individuals have the right to decide the treatment measures they will receive – as long as these decisions are taken in a state of sound mind.

Once drafted, the document requires the signatures of two witnesses and that of a public notary or gazetted officer. A magistrate's signature is no longer a requirement in India, thus the process has been simplified.

A living will is not just for older people. Young adults may be involved in road accidents or other sudden catastrophic events and hence benefit from having one. They can always update their living will depending on any change in preferences as they get older.

To sum it up, a living will might be all that we have available to speak on our behalf when we no longer have a voice, in a life filled with unpredictability. Reserved for irreversible or terminal illnesses, it cannot be invoked for recoverable illnesses, and therefore will not affect routine medical or surgical care.

(Dr. Rajeev Jayadevan is convener, research cell, Kerala State IMA and honorary senior consultant gastroenterologist, Sunrise Hospital Cochin. rajeevjayadevan@gmail.com)

THE GIST

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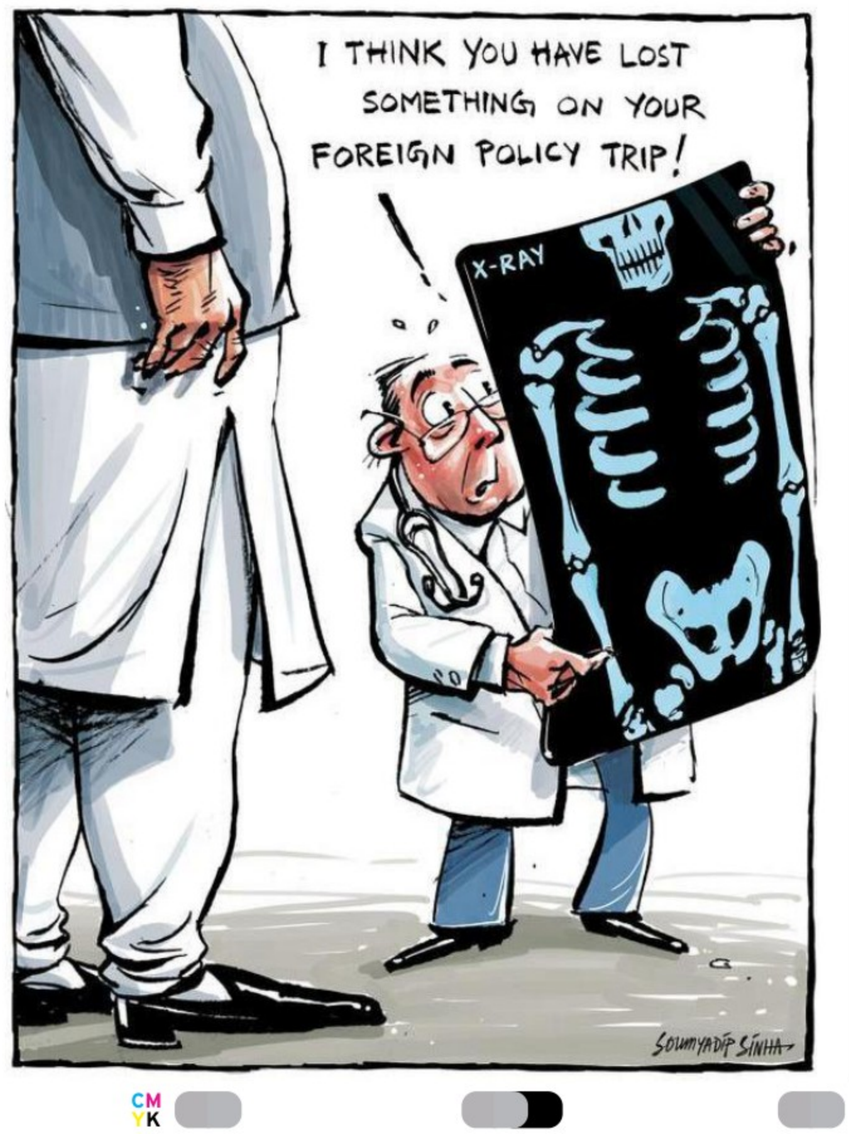
HUMERUS



SNIPPETS

Use of technology in research related to health

Use of stem cell therapy for autism

Press Trust of India

The National Medical Commission has issued an advisory declaring stem cell therapy illegal for the treatment of Autism Spectrum Disorder in compliance with a Supreme Court order.

The move is aimed at curbing illegal practices by private clinics in metropolitan and tier-2 cities that claim to treat autism and cerebral palsy using stem cell therapy, sources said.

According to the advisory issued based on ICMR recommendations on Wednesday to all medical colleges, hospitals and registered medical practitioners, stem cell therapy can now be used only for 32 approved diseases.

Mice cloning and genetic mutations

Reuters

Revealing the limitations of cloning, researchers who repeatedly cloned mice for two decades have discovered that such serial duplication triggers grave genetic mutations that accumulate over the generations and ultimately become fatal.

A total of 1,206 cloned laboratory mice were generated from a single female donor mouse from 2005 to 2025 in research conducted in Japan. There were no outward signs of trouble through the first 25 generations, but mutations subsequently began piling up until becoming fatal.

The 58th generation of the clones, burdened by mutations died a few days after birth.

Framework for animal testing

Reuters

Britain's medicines regulator said on Wednesday it will introduce a framework by the end of 2026, which would allow drug makers to ask a review of the data for drugs being developed without animal testing before applying for approval.

The draft guidance from the United Kingdom's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency aims to reduce reliance on animal studies and aligns with a broader global push to limit such testing in drug development.

The U.S. FDA too had issued draft guidance encouraging companies to reduce animal testing and adopt alternatives.

Fake X-rays and the use of AI

Reuters

Fake X-ray images created by artificial intelligence tools to resemble true results from human patients can fool not only experienced radiologists but also the artificial intelligence tools themselves, according to a study.

The study illustrates the potential for manipulation by bad actors. Seventeen radiologists from 12 hospitals in six countries reviewed 264 X-ray images, half of which had been generated by the artificial intelligence tools including ChatGPT or RoentGen. When radiologist readers were unaware of the study's true purpose, only 41% spontaneously identified AI-generated images, according to a report.

CEO says 4.46 crore voters mapped in Karnataka; groups question SIR rollout

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Of the 5.57 crore electors in Karnataka, 4.46 crore have already been mapped as part of the ongoing voter roll mapping ahead of the proposed Special Intensive Revision (SIR), Chief Electoral Officer – Karnataka V. Anbukumar told members of the coalition 'My Vote, My Right' on Wednesday, adding that the mapping may not be fully accurate at this stage.

The meeting was held after around 20 members of the coalition gathered outside the office of the Chief Electoral Officer, questioning the need for the SIR in the State. The coalition pointed out that the exercise was already under way in 12 States and Union Territories and must be put on hold until the Supreme Court decides on the petitions challenging it.

Civil society group 'My Vote, My Right' members gather to submit a memorandum to the Chief Electoral Officer in Bengaluru on Thursday. ALLEN EGENUSE J.

Mr. Anbukumar told the group that discrepancies in the mapping would become clearer only after the enumeration phase begins. He added that voters who remain unmapped may receive notices. However, according to the group, he did not give clarifications on concerns regarding the exclusion of voters during the mapping process and the SIR

Members of the group described the CEO's response as unsatisfactory. They also flagged his remarks about working within "limitations", saying this raised further questions about accountability. The coalition said the mapping exercise lacks transparency and should be halted, and alleged that the SIR could disproportionately affect the working poor, women, Dalits, and other marginalised communities.

The group submitted a letter to the CEO raising 16 questions. The key questions raised by the group include how the mapping is being done, the legal basis for linking voter records to the 2002 rolls, and which communities may be affected during the process.

The coalition has questioned the lack of clarity around terms such as "logical discrepancies" in the Election Commission's SIR guidelines and whether such provisions could lead to deletions. It also sought details on action taken against alleged misuse of Form 7 to delete voters, including complaints that Muslim voters have been removed. The letter also questions the timing of the exercise, noting that Assembly elections are due only in 2028, and asks why the SIR is being undertaken while the matter is still before the Supreme Court. Stating that the way mapping is being conducted could lead to the exclusion of many eligible voters, the coalition has urged the EC to address the concerns and ensure transparency before proceeding with the SIR in Karnataka.

Lecturer assaulted after proposing to student in college

The student objected to his behaviour and allegedly hit him with a slipper later outside the classroom; case booked against the faculty

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Tension prevailed in Sri Siddhartha Institute of Medical Sciences and Research Centre in T. Begur, Nelamangala taluk of Bengaluru Rural district, after a group of students allegedly assaulted an assistant professor on the campus for reportedly proposing to a female student inside a classroom.

Videos of the incident, which allegedly occurred on March 23 around 1 p.m., were circulated widely on social media on Thursday. The Nelamangala police have registered a case against the assistant professor of microbiology for his alleged misconduct.

The complaint was filed by Devakar S.V., a professor at the institution. Based on it, the accused, identified as Abdul Rahman Shariff, has been booked under Sections 74, 75(1), and 329(3) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS).

The lecturer is said to have approached the student during class hours, offered her a chocolate, and proposed to her. The student objected to his behaviour and allegedly hit him with a slipper later outside the classroom.

According to initial reports, a group of students assaulted the accused near a parked vehicle on the college premises. GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

The situation escalated as other students gathered and confronted the lecturer on campus.

According to initial reports, a group of students allegedly chased him and assaulted him near a parked vehicle on the college premises. The lecturer later managed to escape.

The accused had allegedly faced prior complaints from students over inappropriate behaviour. Acting on these complaints, the college management had issued him a notice seeking an explanation and had restricted his entry to the campus, said the police.

Text & Context and Health

Weekday features on *The Hindu* epaper (epaper.thehindu.com) carries explainers, special articles and quizzes. In the latest issue (March 27, Friday), the following articles are available:

- What is driving the fall in gold prices?
  newsth.live/goldprices
- Why do we need a living will?
  newsth.live/livingwill

You can use your smartphone's inbuilt features to access these articles. If it's an Android phone, use Google Lens to read and tap the url to access an article. If it's an iPhone, use Live Text on camera to do the same.

The change comes after the State government announced a government holiday for Mahaveer Jayanti on March 30 instead of March 31. FILE PHOTO

SSLC third language examination postponed by a day

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU:

The Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) has postponed the SSLC third language exam scheduled to be held on March 30 to March 31.

The board came up with this decision after the State government announced a government holiday on the occasion of Mahaveer Jayanti on March 30 instead of March 31.

Third language includes Hindi, Kannada, English, Arabic, Urdu, Sanskrit, Konkani, Tulu, and Marathi. The board also clarified that there is no change in the exam schedule of the remaining subjects.

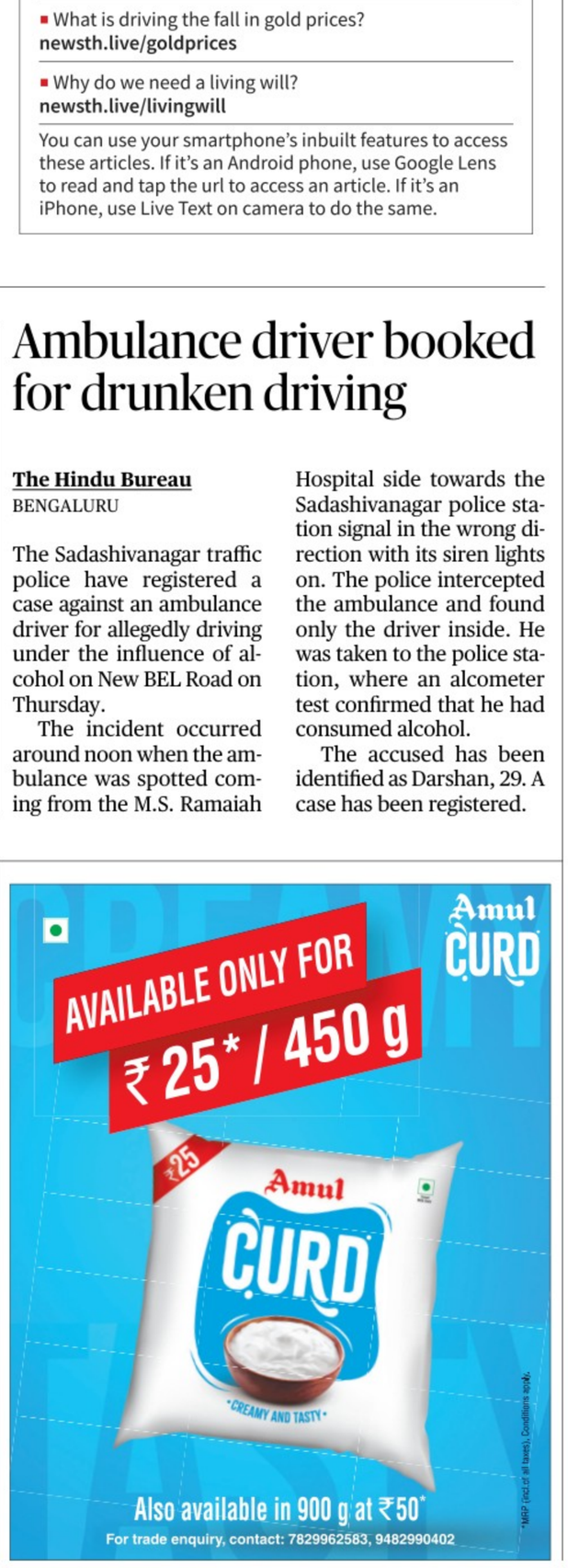
Ambulance driver booked for drunken driving

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Sadashivanagar traffic police have registered a case against an ambulance driver for allegedly driving under the influence of alcohol on New BEL Road on Thursday.

The incident occurred around noon when the ambulance was spotted coming from the M.S. Ramaiah Hospital side towards the Sadashivanagar police station signal in the wrong direction with its siren lights on. The police intercepted the ambulance and found only the driver inside. He was taken to the police station, where an alcometer test confirmed that he had consumed alcohol.

The accused has been identified as Darshan, 29. A case has been registered.



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TV Partner: புதிய தலைமுறை; புதுயுகம்

Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

Number of beds to be added to Andhra Pradesh hospitals

10,000 The completion of multispecialty hospitals in Warangal and Hyderabad will add 10,000 beds to the State public health system, said Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. He also said that the department is developing a website where non-resident Telangana doctors can register to volunteer. PTI

Increase in allocation of commercial gas to Rajasthan

10 in per cent. The Union government has increased the allocation of commercial gas to Rajasthan by 10%, following a request from the State, officials said on Thursday. The State government had earlier urged the Centre for additional gas allocation to meet the growing demand. Following this request, the allocation of commercial gas was increased, the official said. PTI

Increase in India's carbon emissions in 2025

0.70 in per cent. This is the slowest annual increase in more than two decades, data from a research analysis showed, as record clean-energy additions and weak power demand curbed the rise in fossil-fuel use. This is a sharp slowdown from the growth of 4%-11% in the preceding four years, excluding the impact of COVID in 2020. REUTERS

Amount of 'wartime' budget South Korea aims to roll out

17 in $ billion. Officials aim to "draw up a supplementary budget worth 25 trillion won next month — funded by excess tax revenue — in response to the prolonged Middle East conflict", the government said in a statement. The Bill aims to support small and mid-sized firms and vulnerable households hit by the prolonged war. AFP

Donations received by the ruling BJP in 2024-25

6,074 in ₹ crore. Donations to national parties surged by 161% in 2024-25 from the previous fiscal, with the BJP accounting for the overwhelming majority, according to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms. Total donations above ₹20,000 declared stood at ₹6,648.563 crore. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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What is driving the fall in gold prices?

Are interest rate expectations affecting gold prices? Why is a stronger dollar pushing prices down? Is a liquidity crunch forcing investors to book profits in gold? Will prices recover after the current correction?

EXPLAINER

Areena Arora

The story so far:

Gold, long seen as a safe haven in times of crisis, is behaving differently this time since the onset of the West Asian conflict on February 28. Since the start of the war, gold prices have fallen sharply. In India, 24-carat gold, which was trading close to ₹1.9 lakh per 10 grams in late January, has dropped to around ₹1.3 lakh per 10 grams. In most crises over the past two decades, gold has either held its value or risen. During the 2008 financial meltdown, gold surged as banking systems faltered. It rose sharply again during the COVID-19 pandemic as economies shut down and central banks flooded markets with liquidity. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, gold surged nearly 10% in the weeks following the start of the conflict. "Everybody should turn to gold as a safe haven when there is a political crisis, a military crisis, a financial crisis, or an oil crisis. That's the first thing we do," Bhagwan Das, former associate professor of Economics at Loyola College, Chennai, said. So why isn't that happening now?

Why does gold usually rise in a crisis?

Gold does not pay interest, unlike other common assets. So, when returns on other safe assets such as U.S. government bonds rise, gold becomes less attractive because investors can earn a steady income from bonds. But when bond yields fall or uncertainty spikes, the reverse happens, and investors move into gold to preserve their wealth.

There is also the dollar factor. Gold is priced in U.S. dollars globally. When the dollar weakens, gold becomes cheaper for buyers using other currencies, pushing up demand and prices. A weaker dollar and lower interest rates combined – which was the case in several past global crises – are gold's best friends.

What changed this time?

Several things changed at once, and all of them have pushed gold prices down. Factors that usually support gold, low interest rates, and a weaker dollar, have all moved in the opposite direction.

When the West Asian conflict began, oil prices jumped sharply, crossing $120 a barrel and breaching $100 per barrel for the first time since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The war created one of the largest supply disruptions in the global oil market, according to a March report by the International Energy Agency.

Higher oil prices push up the cost of almost everything, raising fears of inflation. In response, central banks typically raise interest rates to cool demand. While rates have not yet risen further, expectations have shifted. Markets now expect rates to stay higher for longer.

When investors expect interest rates to remain high, government bonds, which pay a fixed return, become more attractive. Gold, which yields no interest, has to compete with that. Even without an actual rate hike, the mere expectation that rate cuts are off the table is enough to push investors toward bonds and away from gold.

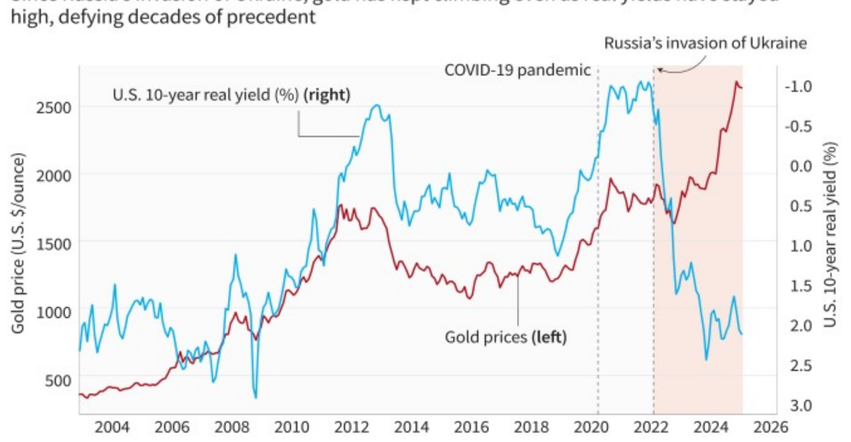
Before the conflict, inflation had been easing globally, and major central banks had been signalling rate cuts to support slowing economies. The oil shock changed that calculus.

Shifts in safe havens

Physical demand for gold jewellery has softened as consumers adjust to higher prices. But investment demand, particularly through gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs), has remained resilient.

Gold stopped following the rules in 2022

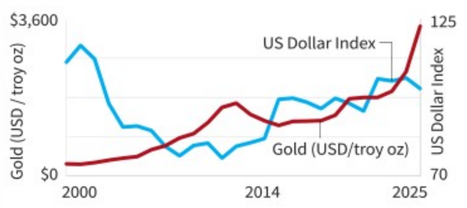
Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, gold has kept climbing even as real yields have stayed high, defying decades of precedent



SOURCE: WORLD GOLD COUNCIL AND FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF ST. LOUIS

For 25 years, gold rose when the dollar fell. Not anymore

A 25-year relationship that has held through wars, crises and rate cycles



SOURCES: WORLD GOLD COUNCIL; US DOLLAR INDEX FUTURES. ANNUAL AVERAGES 2000-2025.

■ The dollar is still the world's go-to currency in a crisis. When oil prices spike, inflation fears prompt investors to pull money away from gold to ensure liquidity. That demand for liquidity has kept the dollar strong even as its long-term dominance slowly erodes.

"The changing expectation of central bank policy actions has been a key factor," said Kavita Chacko, Research Head for India at the World Gold Council.

Higher expected interest rates also make dollar-denominated assets such as U.S. Treasury bonds more attractive. As money flows into these assets, the dollar strengthens – and a stronger dollar makes gold more expensive for foreign buyers, dampening demand.

"The strengthening dollar increases the opportunity cost of holding gold," Ms. Chacko said. "That has been a key factor influencing prices."

Why are investors now selling gold specifically?

Gold had been having a strong run. Internationally, prices touched over $5,000 per troy ounce before the conflict began. In India, prices hit an all-time high of nearly ₹1.8 lakh per 10 grams of 24-carat gold in late January 2026, capping a streak in which prices had more than doubled over two years, driven by geopolitical uncertainty, central bank buying, and a weakening dollar through most of 2025.

When prices fall sharply from such highs, a chain reaction can set in. Investors who had set automatic sell orders to limit their losses see those orders trigger, flooding an already falling market with supply. That pushes prices down further, triggering more sell orders yet. The fall in prices feeds itself.

Compounding this is a liquidity crunch amidst looming fears of a prolonged war and potentially long-lasting oil supply disruption. Stock markets have fallen sharply since the conflict began, and when one part of a portfolio bleeds, investors often sell what is still in profit to cover the damage. Gold, sitting on years of gains, is an obvious candidate.

"It is a liquidity issue. Other asset classes have seen sharp falls, so you make up for shortfalls there, cover losses there by booking some profits here," Ms. Chacko said.

Is the dollar now the haven gold used to be?

To some extent, yes, at least in the short run. There is a growing push to move away from the dollar. Its share in global foreign exchange reserves has declined from about 71% in the early 2000s to under 60% in recent years, as countries diversify into other currencies and gold, according to the U.S. Federal Reserve. But that shift has limits, and the dollar still dominates a third of all global trade denominated in it.

It remains the currency countries need when they buy oil or pay for imports. For now, when a crisis hits, the world still reaches for dollars.

When oil, also priced in dollars, becomes more expensive, countries need more dollars to pay for their imports, driving up demand for the dollar.

"American dollar is the go-to currency whenever there is a threat of inflation caused by rising crude oil prices," Mr. Das said. "Gold has lost its appeal temporarily. The emphasis is going back to the dollar."

But gold has not lost its shine yet. Central banks that are among the largest and most consistent buyers of gold have not stopped accumulating it. Purchases slowed modestly in 2025 compared to the three years prior, but remained well above historical averages, Ms. Chacko said. The World Gold Council's data for February 2026 points to a strong rebound in central bank buying.

After the U.S. and its Western allies froze Russian financial assets held in Western banks following the Ukraine invasion, many governments pivoted to concluding that financial assets alone were insufficient as reserves.

Gold, which is a physical asset that cannot be frozen or sanctioned, became more attractive.

Should ordinary investors be worried?

Price corrections of this kind are not unusual, Mr. Das said. Gold has experienced sharp pullbacks before, including after its peaks in 2011 and 2020, only to recover and move higher eventually.

In India, the picture is more nuanced. Physical demand for jewellery has softened as consumers adjust to higher prices. But investment demand, particularly through gold exchange-traded funds (ETFs), has remained resilient.

Gold ETF inflows in India were positive for the tenth consecutive month in February, according to World Gold Council data, even as some investors booked profits. Physical demand for gold told a similar story. While February gold imports were 38% lower than January, they were still over 80% higher in volume compared to the same month last year.

"The underlying demand is still there," said Ms. Chacko. "When there has been a correction and people see prices stabilise, there is often an immediate rush to buy. The sentiment appears to be quite positive and bullish."

What happens next then?

Much depends on how the West Asian conflict unfolds. If oil prices stabilise or fall, inflation fears will be eased, rate hike expectations will recede, and gold's appeal as a non-interest-bearing asset will increase again. If the conflict deepens and oil climbs further, stagflation which is prolonged slow growth combined with high inflation, becomes a real concern, which has historically also been good for gold.

"Price correction is a normal thing in every market," Mr. Das said. "Gold will certainly appreciate in the future. This is a temporary situation."

The short-term picture is volatile and uncertain, and how far prices will move remains anyone's guess. The longer-term forecast, analysts say, remains intact.

GETTY IMAGES

THE GIST

Gold prices have fallen sharply since the onset of the West Asian conflict as expectations of higher interest rates for longer, a stronger dollar, and rising bond yields reduced gold's appeal as a non-interest-bearing asset.

A chain reaction of sell orders, profit booking amid a liquidity crunch, and investors covering losses in falling stock markets has added to the downward pressure on prices.

Despite the correction, underlying demand remains strong, with positive ETF inflows, continued central bank buying, and analysts viewing the fall as a temporary situation with long-term appreciation intact.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

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With profound grief we announce the passing of our CEO & CFO
Shri. S. RENGARAJAN
11.4.1966 - 25.3.2026
Staff & Management of Kanchi Kamakoti CHILDS Trust Hospital, Chennai.

IN MEMORY OF YOUR LOVED ONES

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Dated : 23.03.2026 - Two cover System

This office's Short term tender Notification No.11/2025-26, Dated: 23.03.2026 for a Single work (Amount put to tender - Rs.370.05 lakhs), Item wise rate tender Is Invited from eligible Super grade electrical contractors from KPWD. Tender queries and clarification as per e-portal. E.M.D should be paid through E-payment. Last date of submission of tenders through on-line : As per e-Portal, Date of opening of tender As per e-portal. For additional Information log on to http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in and contact on official Land-line number 08231-200282 during office hours

Sd/-Executive Engineer, Cauvery Neeravari Nigama Ltd, No.02, VC Division, Maddur.

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(Design)	BWSSB/EE (Design)/PB/ 425/2025-26 Date: 24.03.2026	Rs.99.40 Lakhs / Rs.1.98 Lakhs	01.04.2026 upto 3:00 PM	03.04.2026 at 4.30 PM

Sd/- Executive Engineer (Design)

The detail regarding the tender & participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the abovesigned office during working hours.

DIPR/CP/6470/SSC/2025-26

POLICE DEPARTMENT
Office of the Director General of Police, C.I.D, Special Units and Economic Offences, Carlton House, Palace Road, Bangalore – 560 001

No.02/STS-1/MDN/CCD/CID/2025-26 **Dated: 26/03/2026**

E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE

15 days Short term E-Tenders (Call-2) are invited in "Two Cover System" as per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act, 1999 and rules, 2000 through e-Procurement portal of Government of Karnataka (www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in) for the supply/maintenance of below mentioned Softwares/Components for the use of C.I.D, Bangalore.

2025-26 Police Modernization Scheme

Sl. No.	Name of the Item/Component	Qty	Approximate Cost in Rs.	Last date for bid submission
	15 days Short term E-Tender (Call-2)			
1	Crypto Currency Investigation Tool (License for 03 Years)	01 No.	₹ 34,00,000.00	02.04.2026 at 17-00 Hours
2	Forensic Workstations (License for 03 Years)	02 No's	₹ 52,00,000.00	

In order to participate in e-Procurement platform all the intended Tenderers have to register in the e-Procurement portal. A training program in e-Procurement is organized by e-Procurement cell. The Tenderers who participate in the e-Procurement Tender can take assistance with e-Procurement help desk at 080-46010000, 080-68948777. It is mandatory for Tenderers to register in e-Procurement platform. Please visit https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in for more information or call Helpline 080-46010000, 080-68948777.

For Director General of Police CID, Special Units and Economic Offences, Bangalore

DIPR/CP/6483/AKAR/2025-26

ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ–ಧಾರವಾಡ ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ
ತೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ, ಸರ್ ಸಿದ್ದಪ್ಪ ಕಂಬಳಿ ರಸ್ತೆ, ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ – 580023.

ನಂ:ಎಚ್.ಡಿ.ಎಂ.ಸಿ:2505/ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್–/2025–26/ತೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ, ದಿನಾಂಕ: 26–03–2026.

ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು (ತೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ)
ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಅಧಿಸೂಚನೆ

ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ–ಧಾರವಾಡ ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ, ಸನ್ 2025–26ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆಯ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ನಿಧಿಯಡಿ ಮಂಜೂರಾದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸಾರ್ವಜನಿಕ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆಗಳ ಪಾರದರ್ಶಕ ಆದೇಶ 1999–2000ರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಆ್ಯಕ್ಟ್ 2000 ನಿಯಮದಂತೆ ಸ್ಟ್ಯಾಂಡರ್ಡ್ ಬಿಡ್ ಡಾಕ್ಯುಮೆಂಟ್ ನಿಯಮದನ್ವಯ PWD ಇಲಾಖೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನೊಂದಾಯಿತರಾದ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಗೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಇ–ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ.

ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ವರ್ಗದ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಗೆ ಮೀಸಲಿರಿಸಿದ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳು:

1) ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ– **DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT56782,** ರೂ. 33.95 ಲಕ್ಷ, (12 ತಿಂಗಳು)
2) ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ– **DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT56784,** ರೂ. 46.45 ಲಕ್ಷ, (12 ತಿಂಗಳು)
3) ಇಂಡೆಂಟ್ ನಂ– **DMA/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT56785,** ರೂ. 46.70 ಲಕ್ಷ, (12 ತಿಂಗಳು)

ಈ ಮೇಲಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ಹೆಸರು, ಇ.ಎಮ್.ಡಿ ಹಾಗೂ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಾಗಿ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು **http:/www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ರಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು. ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 27–03–2026 ರಿಂದ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಒಂದು ವೇಳೆ ಸದರಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆ ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಸದರಿ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಯ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪಬ್ಲಿಕ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 10–04–2026 ರಂದು ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ. 4.00 ಗಂಟೆ** ವರೆಗೆ
ಟೆಂಡರ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13–04–2026 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ. 11.00 ಗಂಟೆ** ನಂತರ

ಸಹಿ/–ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರರು (ತೋಟಗಾರಿಕೆ)
ಹು–ಧಾ ಮಹಾನಗರ ಪಾಲಿಕೆ
ಹುಬ್ಬಳ್ಳಿ

ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಇ/ಧಾರವಾಡ/1393/ದೇಶಪಾಂಡೆಪಬ್ಲಿಸಿ/2025–26

KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)
Office of the Executive Engineer,
KBJNL.NLBC Division, Rodalabanda-584127 Tq.Lingasugur Dist.Raichur
email:kbjnlnlbc4@gmail.com

No: KBJNL/NLBC/PB/2025-25/1862 Date: 24.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)
(SERVICE TENDER)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore, the Executive Engineer KBJNL, NLBC Division, Rodalabanda invites percentage tenders in two cover system from eligible A Valid KPWD CLASS I CONTRACTOR for the work of: "Survey, Investigation, Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning of Tank Filling Scheme Works for Construction of Civil and Electro-Mechanical Works Consisting of the following Components: Construction of Intake Canal/pipe, Jack Well /Sump Cum Pump House, vertical turbine pumps coupled to Motor Electrical Panels, 6.6 kvStarter Panels , Capacitor Banks,6.6 Kv Switch Gear system, 11 KV and 33 KVSubstation Switch Yard and Power Transmission Line, Terminal Bays, RisingMains, PressureDistributionNetwork through MS/HDPE pipes For FILLING UP OF EXISTING 19 TANKS IN YELABURGA AND KUKANOOR TALUK OF KOPPAL DISTRICT BY LIFTING WATER FROM KRISHNA RIVER (BACK WATER OF NARAYANAPURA DAM) with Installation of Surge Protection Systemand Including Supply of Spares Parts and Tools Including Requisite Man Power for O & M of the System Covered under the Scope for Five Years from the date of commissioning on Turnkey Basis"- KBJNL/2025-26/LI/WORK_INDENT2753 (Tanks Details;- Mudhol Tank, Karmudi Tank-1&2 Tondihal Tank, Yerehanchenal Tank, Sidnekoppa Tank, Bannikoppa Tank, Mandalgeri Tank -1&2, Dyampur PT, Rajur PT, Ryavanki PT, Bandihal Tank-1&2, Binnal Tank-1&2, Chikkenkoppa Tank, Sompura Tank, Itagi Tank, Chikkabannigola Tank, Linganbandi Tank,Sanganahala Tank, Adoor Tank 1&2, Kuknoor Tank, Nittali Tank, Bhatapanhalli Tank, Malekoppa Tank, Mannapura Tank, Lakamanagule Tank, and Hagedal Tank) as detailed in the Tender Notification published in Karnataka public portal viz http//www.KPPP.karnataka.gov.in. The Intending tenderers may download the tender document through Karnataka public portal viz., www.KPPP.karnataka.gov.in.from 26.03.2026 to 28.04.2026 @ 5.00 PM. The technical bid will be opened on 30.04.2026 @ 11.00 AM and Further details can be obtained from this office in any working days during office hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer KBJNL NLBC Division, Rodalbanda

DIP/RCR/788/KSMC&A/791/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Public Works Department
Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi

No/PWD/CKD DIV/AE-1/TENDER/2025-26/8976 DATE: 25/03/2026

E-Tender/Short term E-ReTender Notification (Call-1 & Call-2)

Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikkodi has invited item wise e-Tenders/Short term E-Retender from Eligible registered contractors for the works coming under the jurisdiction of Chikodi PWD Division 1 work under head of account 4059-Department buildings, 1 work under head of account 3054-SH Bridge maintenance, 1 work under head of account 5054-MDR Improvements and 1 work under head of account 3054-MDR Maintenance, Totally 4 No. of works, Amount put to tender is minimum of Rs. 6.00 Lakhs and maximum of Rs. 640.00 lakhs.

Calendar of events:

1) Pre-bid meeting date: 06-04-2026 at 11.00 AM, at The O/o the under signed. 2) Last date for queries & clarifications : 08-04-2026 up to 5.30 PM, 3) Last Date of Receipt of Bids : 10-04-2026 up to 5.00 PM, 4) Date of opening of Technical bids (Two Cover System): 13-04-2026 at 4.30 PM, 5) Date of opening of Financial bids (Two Cover System): "after approval of Technical bids", 6) If no bid received auto extension will be done by e-proc itself for 2 days.

For more information & forms of tender can be downloaded from kppp.karnataka.gov.in & departmental web site www.kpwd.gov.in. Further details can be collected from O/o Executive Engineer Public Works Dept.,Division Chikkodi during working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD Division Chikodi.

DIPR/BGM/RO-NO-2158/KSMCA/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ
ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ.

ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕಾಪಾಅ/ಪಂರಾಇಂ/ವಿಯಾ/ಕೆ.ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಡಿ.ಬಿ./ಟೆ.ಪ್ರ/ತಾಸ–1/2025–26/2256 ದಿನಾಂಕ:25.03.2026

ಸಂಕ್ಷಿಪ್ತ ಟೆಂಡರ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ (ಅಲ್ಪಾವಧಿ) (KW-3) (ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಮಾತ್ರ)

1) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ವಿವರ.: ಹುಣಸಗಿ ತಾಲೂಕಿನ ರಾಯನಗೋಳ ಮುಖ್ಯ ರಸ್ತೆ ಯಿಂದ ಮಗಲಗಡ್ಡಿ ಹಳ್ಳಕ್ಕೆ ಸಿ.ಡಿ ನಿರ್ಮಾಣ. (RDPR/2025-26/RD/WORK_INDENT25169) **2) ಲೆಕ್ಕ ಶೀರ್ಷಿಕೆ:** 2025–26 ನೇ ಸಾಲಿನ ಕೆ.ಕೆ.ಆರ್.ಡಿ.ಬಿ. ಯೋಜನೆ. **3) ಟೆಂಡರಿಗಿಟ್ಟ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ:** ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಮತ್ತು ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ರೂ 75.00 ಲಕ್ಷ **4) ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರ ದರ್ಜೆ:** 3ನೇ ಮೇಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ದರ್ಜೆ **5) ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂ ಪಡೆಯಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ:** 27.03.2026 ರಿಂದ 08.04.2026 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ **6) ಟೆಂಡರ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಬೆಲೆ ಮತ್ತು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ:** ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ನಮೂದಿಸಿದಂತೆ (ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕ ಹಿಂದಿರುಗಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲಾ) **7) ಟೆಂಡರ ಫಾರಂ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಅಂತಿಮ ದಿನಾಂಕ:** 08.04.2026 ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲ 4:00 ಗಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ **8) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ತಾಂತ್ರೀಕ:** 10.04.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗೆ 11:00 ನಂತರ **9) ಟೆಂಡರ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ ಆರ್ಥಿಕ:**13.04.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗೆ 11:00 ನಂತರ **10) ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ವಿಳಾಸ (ಕಛೇರಿ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ):** ಕಾರ್ಯನಿರ್ವಾಹಕ ಅಭಿಯಂತರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಪಂಚಾಯತ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ. **11) ಅಂತರಜಾಲ ತಾಣದ ವಿಳಾಸ:** https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in

ಸೂಚನೆ: ಟೆಂಡರರಿಗೆಸಂಬಂದಿಸಿದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ಅವಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅಥವಾ https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು (ರಜಾದಿನಗಳು ಹೊರತುಪಡಿಸಿ).

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರರು,
ಪಂಚಾಯತ್ ರಾಜ್ ಇಂಜಿನೀಯರಿಂಗ್ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಯಾದಗಿರ.

ವಾ.ಸಾ.ಸಂ.ಇ/ಯಾದಗಿರ/611/ಕೆ.ಎಸ್.ಎಂ.ಸಿ.&ಎ/2025–26

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Antara Ray, Mother and Natural Guardian of Minor Shreya Pillai, R/at B1-503, Kolte-Patil Mirabilis, Horamavu Agara, Bengaluru–560043, have changed my daughter's name from Shreya Pillai to Shreya Ray for all purposes vide affidavit dated 23/03/2026 sworn before Notary C. Giri Babu at Bengaluru

I, NAVEEN s/o Yebu G Markapur born on 03–03–1994 residing at Srinivasa Nilaya 2nd Floor 2nd MN 4th CRS KR Puram 560036, have changed my name to Naveen Markapur vide affidavit dated 25–03–2026 at Bangalore

I, KOTTURWAR Mahesh, s/o; Krishna Kotturwar, r/o: No–761, 4th A Cross, 9th Main, Kamala Neharu Layout, Yeswanthpura, Blr – 560022. Have changed my name as Mahesh Kumar.

I, Muthaiah Vijayashekar S/o Mutthiah Pillai, R/at No.54, 2nd Cross, Near R T Nagar Police Station, P & T Colony, R T Nagar, Bangalore-560032, have changed my name from Mutthiah Pillai Vijayashekaran to Muthaiah Vijayashekar vide affidavit dated 26/03/2026 sworn before Notary K.V.Mani, B'luru

CHANGE OF NAME

I, No.15312212H, Ex-Hav Murali Manohar A, S/o Aravind Babu residing at #58, 10th Cross, Kailasam Road, Bendre Nagar, Banashankari II Stage, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru-560070, have changed the name of my daughter from Dhanya M to Dhanya Shree M vide affidavit dated: 25/03/2026 sworn before XXIX Addl. Chief Judicial Magistrate, Bengaluru City.

SITUATION VACANT

MARKETING

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PUBLIC NOTICE

THIS IS to inform the general Public that, Mr. A. Krishna Murthy, is the absolute Owner of Property bearing Site No.17, Old Assessment No.32, New No.32/3, Old Khatha No.32/3, New Khatha No.887, Property No.9024376840, Old Property No.32/3/17, Assessment No.571/32/3/17, situated Konappana Agrahara Village, Begur Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, who acquired the same through Registered Gift deed bearing Doc No.5777/2013–14, dated 27.03.2014. Whereas, Original sale deed, which was executed by G M Narayana Reddy, in favour of A Ramappa and A Lakshmappa, registered sale deed, dated 20.09.2006, registered as document No. 16404/2006–07, was lost by Mr. A. Krishna Murthy, and with regard to the same, misplaced/Lost, have lodged Police complaint with Lost Report Article No. 2117987/2026, dated 20.03.2026, before Karnataka State Police, Bangalore City Web Portal, my client have not mortgaged the said document to any of the Financial Institution and the General Public is here by cautioned, not to deal with Schedule Property on bases of loss documents. If any of the Person, claiming right, title and interest over the property through loss documents, please file objections if any along with relevant documents within 07 days of this notice to the below mentioned address and the claims received after the specified time will not be entertained. Date:24.03.2026. Sd/– M Chandrashekar, Advocate No. 28/2, Damodhar Modiliar Street, R K Matha Road, Halasure, Bangalore 560 008 Mobile No. 9945302013

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KARNATAKA POWER TRANSMISSION CORPORATION LIMITED
CIN: U40109KA1999SGC025521

No: CEE/Tr(Op)H/SEE/EE(C)/37/2025-26/16385 Date: 26.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

(THROUGH KARNATAKA PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PORTAL ONLY)

KPTCL invites tenders through KPP portal mode from registered KPWD Civil Contractors having EPF and ESI registration and fulfilling the all other requirements as in NIT (of KPP) for the execution of following **10 no's. of Civil works (within Hassan Transmission Operation Zone jurisdiction): Tender Indent No: KPTCL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT3473, 3476(SC), KPTCL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT3477(ST), KPTCL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT3475(CAT-II(A)), KPTCL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT 3471, 3474, 3478, 3479, 3480, 3481 (General).**

Interested tenderers directly can access the tendering website **https://kptcl.karnataka.gov.in** with hyperlink **"E Procurement KPTCL" or https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** from **27.03.2026 onwards** for detailed NIT and to participate in the tenders through E-procurement. Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Chief Engineer (Ele)
Transmission (Operations) Zone, KPTCL, Prasarana Bhavan, 3rd Floor, Santhepete, B.M. Road, Hassan-573201.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKETING COMMITTEE, CHIKKABALLAPUR

NO.AMD/APMC/CBP:683:2025-26 DATE: 24.03.2026

"SHORT E-TENDER NOTICE (GENERAL)"

Chikkaballapur agricultural produce market committee has invited item-wise tenders in two covers system through e-procurement portal as per standard tender document kw-4 of Karnataka public procurement transparency act 1999 rules 2020 from eligible contractors registered with the public works department of the government of Karnataka for the implementation of the work of providing infrastructure facilities at new international flower market at Chikkaballapura APMC approved under the scheme ridf-31 for the year 2025-26. Tender amount in Lakhs - 1,657.41. E.M.D. amount in Lakhs - 16.60. completion period (excluding rainy season) -11 months. Qualification of contractor: First class Contractors Registered with public works department. **SCHEDULE: (1)** DATE AND VENUE OF PRE-BID MEETING / CLARIFICATION: **10.04.2026 11.00 AM** PLACE: APMC CHIKKABALLAPUR. **(2)** DATE OF TENDER DISPUTE / HEARING / MEDIATION: **15.04.2026 11.00 AM (3)** LAST DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDER (FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL BID) ON E-PROCUREMENT PORTAL: **27.04.2026 4.00 PM (4)** DATE OF OPENING OF TECHNICAL BID: **29.04.2026 04.30 PM (5)** DATE OF OPENING OF FINANCIAL BID: **05.05.2026 11.00 AM (6)** PLACE OF OPENING OF TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL BIDS (ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE) APMC CHICKBALLAPIR. Terms and conditions and further information can be obtained from this office (Secretary, APMC Chikkaballapur-9902775141 and Assistant executive engineer, Market development project, no. 1 sub-division, YESHAWANTPUR, Bangalore-9844934576) during office hours except on holidays.

Sd/- Secretary Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Chikkaballapur

Sd/- Administrative Officer Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee Chikkaballapur

DIPR/CHIKKABALLAPURA/RO:508/KSMCA/2025-26

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAM LIMITED
(A government of Karnataka Enterprises)
Office of the Executive Engineer, Karnataka Neeravari Nigam Limited, No.4 BRLBC Division, Bhadravathi.

No EE/ KNNL/ No.4/ BDVT/TA/ PB-1/ TFS/4th Call Tender Notification No. 12/2025-26 Date: 23.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION - Call-4(THROUGH KPP PORTAL ONLY)

Ref 1)EE/KNNL/No.4/BDVT/TA/PB-1/TFS/Tender Notification No.12/2025-26 Date: 14.10.2025 2) EE/KNNL/ No.4/ BDVT/TA/PB-1/TFS/2nd Call Tender Notification No.12/2025-26 Date:25.11.2025 3) EE/KNNL/No.4/ BDVT/TA/PB-1/TFS/3rd Call Tender Notification No.12/2025-26 Date:28.01.2026

Percentage Tenders by KPP portal in the prescribed form is invited by the undersigned on behalf of Managing Director, KNNL, Bangalore from the eligible Contractor under the Head of Account TFS. The No. of work is 01. The approximate cost of amount put to tender is Rs.523.46 Lakhs. The amount of EMD is Rs.7.86 Lakhs (by kpp portal) contractors can access and submission of completed e-tendering documents from 25.03.2026 to 16.04.2026 upto 17.30 hours in the website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Technical Bid will be opened on 17.04.2026 at 17.30 hours and Financial Bid will be opened on after obtaining approval of technical bid from competent authority. Pre-Bid Meeting on Dtd: 10.04.2026 @ 11.00 Hrs at O/q Executive Engineer, No.4 BRLBC Division, Bhadravathi. Stipulated period for the completion of work is 12 Months (Including) monsoon).

For more conditions and details visit website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. OR at undersigned in all working days during office hours on telephone No. 8660573513.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KNNL, No.4 BRLBC Division, Bhadravathi.

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/144/03/2083

KARNATAKA NEERAVARI NIGAMA LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprises)
***Office of the* Executive Engineer, KNNL, SLIS, Division No-2, Huvinahadagali, Vijayanagara(Dist)**
Ph.No.08399-200001 e-mail: eeslid2hdl@gmail.com

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION (ONLY THROUGH "e-Procurement" SYSTEM)

Reference:1.This office Tender Notification No: 1950/2025-26 Dated: 24.03.2026
2.This office Tender Notification No: 1951/2025-26 Dated: 24.03.2026

Tenders in Electronic mode are invited on behalf of the Managing Director, KNNL, Bengaluru, bythe Executive Engineer, KNNL, SLIS Division No.2, Huvinahadagali for the work of Dismantling, Refurbishment and repairs of pumps & motors of Mundaragi and Gadag branch motors of 2nd lift jackwell at Left bank of SLIS from the eligibleTenderers who are fulfilled the terms and conditionsmentioned as in Tender Notification cited at reference (1)&(2) above. The tenders having Work Indent No.KNNL/2025-26/OW/WORK_INDENT4251 & 4252) in KPP-Portal and The amount put to tender this work is Rs.253.64 Lakhand 401.89 Lakh (Excluding GST) and EMD amount is Rs.3.80 Lakh and 6.02 Lakh.

Therefore, The bidders can access the tender in https://kppp.karnataka.gov.inwebsite from 27.03.2026 and the last date of submission for the tender is 10.04.2026 and date of opening of Technical Bid 13.04.2026.

Further bidders are hereby by instructed to contact or visit the below mentioned office in working hours regarding Terms and Conditions of the tender and for furthermore information please contact e-procurement Helpdesk Phone Numbers:+91-80-46010000, +91-80-68948777.Conditional tenders are liable to be rejected. The officer competent to accept the tender shall have the right to reject any or all the tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KNNL, SLIS Division No-2, Huvinahadagali, Vijayanagara(Dist)

DIPR/Vijayanagar/2025-26/KSMCA/RO No/621

Government of Karnataka Zilla Panchayath, Chitradurga
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Chitradurga-577501
Email : zped.cta@gmail.com Office phone no: 08194-222372

No:EE/PRED/CTA/TEND/TECH//2025-26/3724 Date:25.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Executive Engineer, Pachayath Raj Engineering Division, chitradurga has invites works tender under Standard tender document under various head of account grant for 11 works (Indent No: 25695, 25596, 25597, 25598, 25692, 25693, 25694, 25595, 25080, 25081) for the Estimated Cost Minimum Rs.20.00 lakhs Maximum 100.00 lakhs Total Rs:600.00 Lakhs. Further information obtained from the office during the office hours or any quarries contact (support@eprochelpdesk.com) or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: tel: 09240214000, or 09240214000 this office Telephone no. 08194-222372 at office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division,Chitradurga as dates below:- **(1)** Last Date for information any quarries Date : 06.04.2026 Time 11.00 **(2)** Last Date for Submitting the tender Date : 07.04.2026 : Time 16.00 **(3)** Last Date of Opening the Technical Bid Date : 08.04.2026 Time 16.01 **(4)** Last Date of Opening the Financial Bid Date : 09.04.2026 Time 16.02

Further any quarries for tender contact (support@eprochelpdesk.com) or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: tel: 09240214000, or 09240214000 or this Phone no.08194-222372 or Executive Engineer, P.R.E.Division, Chitradurga in office hours.

RO.No.794:DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer P.R.E. Division, Chitradurga

BENGALURU CENTRAL CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Chickpete Division, 8th Main, 2nd Block, Jayanagar, Kanakanapalya, Bengaluru-560011.

No: EE/CKP/E-PROC/16/2025-26 Date: 25-03-2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER
(Two Cover System) (Through GOK KPP Portal only)

Executive Engineer (Chickpete Division), BCCC, Bengaluru invites Tenders from eligible Contractors registered in BCCC or equivalent registration with CPWD / KPWD / Railways / MES / National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the Construction of Works detailed below.

(Standard Tender Document - KW-4)

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Annual Maintenance of Arterial and Sub Arterial Roads including Footpath in Chickpete Division. **(For 1 Year) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 139.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): Rs. 1.00 Lakh through e-Procurement and Rs. 1,08,500/- through Bank Guarantee.**
2	Annual Maintenance of Storm Water Drains in Chickpete Constituency. **(For 3 Year) - Estimated Amount (Rs. in Lakhs): 430.00, EMD Amount (in Rs.): Rs. 1.00 Lakh through e-Procurement and Rs. 5,45,000/- through Bank Guarantee.**

Calendar of Events: 1) The Tender Documents can be Downloaded from the GOK Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Website: **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. 2)** Pre Bid Meeting will be held on **30-03-2026 at 15.00 Hours in the Office of the Chief Engineer, Zone-2, BCCC, Annex-3, 4th Floor, GBA Office Compound, N.R. Square, Bengaluru, 3)** Last Date for Uploading the Filled Tender Document is **02-04-2026 upto 16.00 Hours. 4)** Date of Opening of Technical Bid: **04-04-2026 at 11.30 Hours. 5)** Date of Opening of Financial Bid: **After Technical Bid Approved.** Further details can be had from the above office.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer, Chickpete Division, BCCC.

INTERVIEW

‘Meaningful competition lies in technology and long-term value, not price alone’

XPeng founder He Xiaopeng says intelligent driving and in-house innovation are powering China’s EV boom, even as competition intensifies, tech firms enter the space, and new bets on robotics and flying cars reshape mobility

Ananth Krishnan

Since the launch of its first EV model in early 2019, XPeng Motors has emerged as a major domestic player making waves in China, with its AI-powered smart driving cars increasingly ubiquitous on the streets of Beijing, as it looks to challenge the dominance of Chinese giant BYD, now the world’s largest EV maker, and overseas competitors such as Tesla. The company delivered 4.3 lakh units in 2025, doubling its sales. Its founder, entrepreneur He Xiaopeng, in an interview, explains the factors behind his company’s – and China’s – EV success.

He Xiaopeng, founder of XPeng. REUTERS

How do you view the recent rapid growth of both XPeng and China’s EV market as a whole?

One key reason for our [XPeng’s] success is the popularisation of high-level intelligent driving. We stick to full-stack, in-house R&D for intelligent driving, including intelligent driving hardware, free software, and frequent over-the-air updates, making premium intelligent driving accessible to all users. The industry has seen intense competition over the past two years. But long-term price-only competition erodes profits and innovation capacity. Meaningful competition lies in capabilities, technology and systems. It is not only about price.

China’s EV production exceeded 16 million (1.6 crore) units in 2025, with a penetration rate of 57%. Consumer choices are no longer a simple switch from fuel to electric, but an upgrade from ordinary cars to smart vehicles. I believe the industry will enter a deep elimination phase over the next 3-5 years, with a sharp reduction in the number of brands. International giants are accelerating electrification and smart transformation, intensifying global competition. Meanwhile, Chinese brands are expanding their first-mover advantages. Internal competition will shift from homogeneous cutthroat rivalry to differentiated breakthroughs. Healthy industrial competition lifts overall technological standards. Only by shifting from price competition to competition in innovation, capabilities and long-term value can China’s smart mobility industry achieve high-quality development and maintain global leadership. Our [Xpeng’s] internationalisation is accelerating steadily. In 2025, our overseas deliveries totalled 45,008 units, up 96%. Europe performed strongly with 22,787 units delivered, up 126% year-on-year.

It’s not just carmakers but tech companies getting into EVs in China; smartphone maker Xiaomi is an example. What do you see as the advantages and disadvantages they have when compared with traditional automakers?

Based on years of practice, we believe success in EVs relies on two core capabilities. One is long-term in-house development of R&D for core technologies, with sustained investment in intelligent driving, physical AI and large models. The other is user-centric technology deployment, turning cutting-edge tech into tangible, trustworthy daily experiences.

The two types of companies have different origins, genes, and paths, but they will eventually converge with no absolute superiority, but only phased differences. Many new automakers come from the Internet, building from software to hardware, with an inherent DNA of software-defined vehicles, AI-driven experiences, and treating cars as intelligent terminals from the start. Traditional automakers are building from hardware to software, leveraging decades of automotive manufacturing to add intelligent and technological capabilities.

First, the strengths I see are native AI and software thinking, short decision-chains, fast product iteration, deep understanding of user experience, and more sensitivity to frontier tech, whether autonomous driving, robots, or flying cars. Their innovation boundaries are wider. Their weakness lies in needing time to accumulate automotive manufacturing and supply chain management expertise. For automakers, they have a deep manufacturing heritage, mature production, quality control and supply chain capabilities. Their weakness lies in being slow to build software and AI talent systems. They need to improve their rapid iteration capabilities.

In China, we are also seeing a big push by many EV firms, including yours, into robotics...

Humanoid robots are at a strategic inflection point, moving from technical validation to large-scale commercialisation, similar to EVs a decade ago. Humanoid robots share a strong commonality with cars. In my view, embodied intelligence includes both humanoid robots and automobiles. In the next decade, cars will evolve into automotive robots, with an overlap of around 90% software and 50-60% in hardware. However, not all automakers can successfully transition to humanoid robots, as most rely on integrated supplier-based R&D. Success in the next decade requires in-house hardware and software R&D, cross-domain integration, and commercial capabilities. Only strong tech companies can capture this convergence of technological innovation and industry.

Chinese and American robots are leading the global first tier, each with unique strengths. Humanoid robots, as physical carriers of embodied intelligence, are at the cusp of an explosion similar to EVs a decade ago. China launched over 300 models last year, more than half the global total. Humanoid robot R&D is an extremely complex hardware-software engineering project. Xpeng has taken a forward-looking path: building a fully integrated intelligent agent with extreme human likeness in form and intelligence [called IRON]. IRON’s core advantages lie in its human-like design, and 2026 will be Xpeng’s first year of mass production. IRON is a high-level humanoid robot, a fully integrated intelligent agent with extreme human likeness in both form and intelligence – a global first. It’s designed from the inside out, with a human-like spine, bionic muscles, and fully wrapped flexible skin. By the end of 2026, Xpeng aims to achieve large-scale mass production of high-level humanoid robots, which will first serve commercial scenarios such as guidance, shopping assistance, and patrol.

What do you see as the potential for the “flying cars” market and what’s being called “the low altitude economy” in China?

I am encouraged by the mention of the low-altitude economy in the Government Work Report [China’s official policy document released on March 5, 2026]. It is evolving into a major new pillar of the economy and will rise further in five years. Between 2030 and 2040, it will transform daily life and work. Policymakers have a clear long-term vision, which I welcome greatly.

In 2026, Xpeng’s first flying car, the Land Aircraft Carrier, will enter mass production and delivery. In March, batch trial production and multi-aircraft test flights of the AeroHT Land Aircraft Carrier were completed. The AeroHT plant is the world’s first modern assembly line for large-scale flying car production, integrating aviation and automotive manufacturing to meet strict aviation standards. It has a planned annual capacity of 10,000 units, and an initial capacity of 5,000 units with one aircraft rolling off the line every 30 minutes at full production. That is 10 times the efficiency of traditional aviation manufacturing.

The low-altitude economy will unlock three 1 trillion RMB ($145 billion) markets. The first trillion layer is manufacturing of light aircraft, helicopters, drones; the second is investment in infrastructure including general airports, helipads and low-altitude networks; the third is tech services, air mobility and consumption upgrading driven by innovation. This includes personal entertainment and tourism – flight experiences, sightseeing and training – urban commuting, and public services, such as emergency medical rescue, highway accident response and high-rise evacuations.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Know your English

S. Upendran

“I have a couple of questions.”

“Only a couple? You’re usually full of questions.”

“Is it true that a hamburger is made of ‘beef’ and not ‘ham’?”

“That’s right. In the U.S. and the U.K., when you order a hamburger....”

“...if it contains beef, why do they call it a hamburger, then?”

“...they call it a hamburger because it was introduced by the Germans. The....”

“Why don’t they call it ‘beefburger’?”

“...will you please let me finish? The hamburger was first made popular in the city of Hamburg in Germany.”

“Hamburg! You mean the hamburger is named after a city?”

“Exactly! The German immigrants, who came to America, introduced the hamburger to the local population. The ‘hamburger steak’ or the ‘hamburg steak’, as it was called then, referred to meat.”

“But what about the bun in which the meat is placed?”

“...there were no buns then. The original hamburger steak was just ground beef. The hamburger that you are thinking about is a twentieth-century invention.”

“I see. As time went on, people got rid of the word ‘steak’ and started calling it ‘hamburger’, I suppose?”

“That’s right! Nowadays, it’s been reduced to ‘burger’. Unlike in the old days, a burger these days doesn’t necessarily have to be made of meat.”

“Yes, we have veggie burgers now, don’t we?”

“Exactly! Many non-vegetarians abroad are turning vegetarian.”

“While many vegetarians in India are turning non-vegetarians! Tell me, do we eat any other city, town, village....”

“...ha! Ha! The sandwich that we eat is actually the name of a village in England. The word ‘sandwich’ means ‘village of sand’.”

“Village of sand, eh?”

“And then, you have the ‘frankfurter’. It is a kind of smoked sausage....”

“...wait, wait, wait. Let me guess. Frankfurter. It’s probably been named after the German city of Frankfurt!”

“Excellent! Now, what’s your second question?”

“In English movies, after a wedding, the guests gather around the bride and the groom, raise their glasses and then say, ‘A toast to the bride and the groom.’ What does ‘toast’ mean?”

“You are wishing them happiness and success in life.”

“I see. But is there a connection between this ‘toast’ and the ‘toast’ that some of us have for breakfast?”

“You see in the 17th century, at parties and on special occasions, people actually used to put a piece of toast at the bottom of a large vessel. Then, wine or ale was poured into the vessel.”

“And whoever got the toast had to make a speech, right?”

“No, no! You see the vessel was passed around from one individual to another. Each individual used to pour a drink for himself and pass on the container. The guest of honour was always the last person to receive the container. And when he poured out the wine for himself, the piece of toast came out too.”

“The guest of honour consumed not only what was left of the wine, but also the piece of toast.”

“I don’t know if this tradition of putting a piece of toast in drinks still continues.”

“Who cares? We still have parties. That’s good enough for me.”

Published in The Hindu on February 1, 2000

THE DAILY QUIZ

A quiz on outbreaks, infamous cases, and the people behind public health controversies

Vasudevan Mukunth

QUESTION 1

A cook from Ireland working in early 20th-century New York refused to believe she was making people sick because she herself never felt ill. However, the authorities detained her twice — the second time for life, on this day in 1915. She subsequently became a symbol of public health versus personal freedom. Name her.

QUESTION 2

Gaëtan Dugas was a Canadian flight attendant who was diagnosed in the early years of a disease that later became a devastating epidemic. Controversially, he was later blamed for ‘seeding’ cases across two continents, and journalists called him “Patient Zero”. What’s the disease in question?

QUESTION 3

At a religious gathering in Seoul in 2020, one attendee with mild COVID-19 symptoms sat through multiple services over several days. Health workers later linked her to thousands of cases, making her the most documented single transmission event of the pandemic. Name the church at the centre of this incident.

QUESTION 4

More than 90% of people who get this disease are asymptomatic yet also shed the virus, allowing the disease to spread silently. Nigeria was the latest country to stop its endemic transmission; right now, only Pakistan and Afghanistan still have such transmission. Which disease?

QUESTION 5

In 2002 in the Guangdong province in China, a doctor named Liu Jianlun had become symptomatic of a disease, but still travelled to Hong Kong and infected 16 guests at the hotel he stayed at. As a result, the disease spread to Canada, Singapore, Taiwan, and Vietnam. Name the disease.

Visual Question:
Name this U.S. health worker who was forcibly detained after attending to Ebola patients during an outbreak in West Africa. She later fought her case in court and won. REUTERS

Questions and Answers to the previous day’s daily quiz: 1. The elusive artist worked under which pseudonym? **Ans: Robin Banks**
2. The Reuters expose hopped on hints left behind in a war-torn country where the anti-establishment spray painter drew seven murals in 2022. **Ans: Ukraine**
3. Banksy has cited this graffiti artist as one of his many inspirations. **Ans: Robert Del Naja**
4. What is the name of Banksy’s dystopian theme park-style art exhibition? **Ans: Dismaland**
5. What is the artist’s most widely reported likely real name? **Ans: Robin Gunningham**
6. The Reuters report released last week suggests Banksy may have changed his legal name to David Jones. It is also the given name of which famous English rock star. **Ans: David Bowie**
7. The enigmatic creator famously orchestrated the partial self-destruction of his artwork via a hidden shredder at Sotheby’s London auction in 2018. Name the painting. **Ans: Girl with Balloon**
Visual: Banksy acknowledged this scene from an iconic 1975 film inspired him to get into graffiti. Name the movie and its director **Ans: *Jaws*; Steven Spielberg**
Early Birds: Tito Shiladitya | Piyali Tuli | Varghese Joseph

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Word of the day

Beatific:
experiencing or bestowing celestial joy

Synonyms: serene, cheerful, ecstatic

Usage: *She gave a beatific smile after hearing the good news.*

Pronunciation: newsth.live/beatific

International Phonetic Alphabet: /biːətɪfɪk/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject ‘Text & Context’

Tunnel road most viable solution to traffic woes: DKS

Deputy Chief Minister estimates that around ₹3,000 cr. will be required for land acquisition and ₹17,000 crore for tunnel road construction

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Deputy Chief Minister D.K. Shivakumar on Thursday told the Legislative Assembly that constructing a tunnel road between Hebbal and Central Silk Board is the most viable solution to ease Bengaluru's traffic congestion.

Replying to a debate on the city's development, he said road widening within the city is impractical due to dense construction and the high cost of land acquisition.

He added that congestion at Goraguntepalya junction on Tumakuru Road could also be addressed through a tunnel road or underpass.

The Deputy Chief Minister says road widening within the city is impractical. K. MURALI KUMAR

Other promises

- Skydeck to be established at Kempe Gowda Layout
- **109 km** elevated corridors planned in city
- **40 km** double-decker flyover to be developed
- Cauvery 6th phase drinking water project to be implemented
- Cabinet to decide on electricity to buildings with occupancy certificates
- **₹1,700 cr.** spent so far on filling potholes

Mumbai's tunnel roads

Drawing comparisons with other cities, Mr. Shivakumar noted that Mumbai is building six to seven tunnel roads and said Bengaluru has limited alternatives to tackle its traffic woes. He estimated that around ₹3,000 crore would be required for land acquisition and ₹17,000 crore for tunnel road construction. "Our tunnel road projects are estimated at ₹700-800 crore per km, compared to ₹1,300-1,400 crore per km in other States," he said.

Addressing concerns over corruption, he said strict action had been initiated against officials allegedly taking bribes for issuing e-khatas, with directions to suspend those involved. Out of approximately 25 lakh properties in the city, A-khatas have been issued to nine lakh properties, he added.

He also announced plans to develop an "AI city" on 8,000 acres near Bidadi in Bengaluru South district, a proposal earlier mooted by Union Minister H.D. Kumaraswamy.

On comparisons with Hyderabad, Mr. Shivakumar said Bengaluru ranks among the world's top technology hubs and does not need to compete with other cities. He cited reports placing Bengaluru sixth globally, behind cities like Beijing, while Hyderabad stands at 26th.

'Govt. will recover money from IAF'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Eshwar Khandre

Forest Minister B. Eshwar Khandre on Thursday told the Legislative Assembly that the Indian Air Force (IAF) authorities were not only in "illegal possession" of forest land in Jarakbande Kaval village of Bengaluru North taluk as the land granted to them had been cancelled, but it had also given about 58 acres of forest land to BMRCL for monetary compensation.

Replying to the issue raised by Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok in the Assembly, the Forest Minister said measures would be taken to recover the money that had been received by the Air Force from metro authorities.

Cancelled

He explained that 452 acres and four-and-a-half guntas of land in Bengaluru North taluk that had been granted to the Air Force in 1987 was cancelled by the Forest Department in 2017 as the land came under the reserved forest classification.

In addition to this, the Air Force authorities were also in possession of 83 acres of land in Jarakbande and Peenya plantation areas, the Minister said.

Considering the national security interest involved, the then Chief Secretary wrote to the Defence Secretary on September 15, 2018, stating that they have to submit a formal application seeking regularisation of land use under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, if they want to keep the land for themselves, Mr. Khandre said.

As per norms, they have to take up afforestation on alternative land and also provide Net Present Value as per norms. But the authorities concerned were yet to make application in this regard, the Minister said, while pointing out that already a joint survey of the land had been completed.

Land in Yelahanka

Similarly, a total extent of 159 acres in Yelahanka hobli of Bengaluru where the aero show is being conducted too belongs to the Forest Department, Mr. Khandre stated.

He expressed concern that though the State government had asked the Defence authorities to reguarlise the land use considering the national interests involved, the Air Force authorities had not made any move in this regard.

He responded positively to a suggestion by Mr. Ashok that here afterwards the local civic authorities in Bengaluru should take permission from the Forest Department to use the above land for any civic purposes instead of the present practice of going via Defence authorities.

Man booked for abusive posts about city police, mid-air misconduct

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) police registered a case against a 32-year-old man for allegedly posting abusive and misleading content about Bengaluru City Police on social media, while also being involved in unruly behaviour on a flight.

Routine monitoring

According to the police, the incident came to light on March 23 during routine social media monitoring.

It was found that a X user with the handle @Utkarshgautam96 had posted abusive remarks targeting Bengaluru City Police, including a tweet that read, '@MumbaiPolice Please arrest @BlrCityPolice'.

Further inquiry revealed that the accused, identified as Utkarsh Gautam, had also posted content on Instagram allegedly making derogatory remarks about the police and falsely claiming that he was illegally detained at the Kempegowda International Airport police station.

Earlier on March 22, a separate complaint was filed by IndiGo airlines staff regarding Gautam's behaviour on board flight 6E373 (Jaipur-Bengaluru).

He allegedly attempted to open the aircraft's rear safety door (AFT L2) mid-air and misbehaved with cabin crew, using abusive language when questioned. Based on the complaint, a case was registered under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), including Sections 351(2) and 352.

The accused was detained by KIA police in Bengaluru and later handed over to the jurisdictional police for further legal action. The police questioned him at the station and cross checked his background before registering a non-cognisable case.

Women professionals say State's menstrual leave policy is 'benevolent sexism'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Terming Karnataka's menstrual leave policy as "benevolent sexism", 15 women professionals, working in senior managerial positions in various private companies, have moved the High Court of Karnataka opposing the policy and questioning the legality of the State government's November 2025 notification mandating one day of paid menstrual leave per month for women employees aged 18 to 52.

The petition has been tagged along with petitions filed by the Karnataka Employers' Association and the Bangalore Hotels' Association challenging the legality of the policy, which are pending adjudication before the court. Justice Anant Ramanath Hegde on Thursday adjourned further hearing till April 1.

It has been stated in the petition that the policy creates a competitive disadvantage for women in hiring and promotions, discourages employers from placing women in leadership roles, and infringes upon privacy by compelling disclosure of menstrual cycles to employers.

"The policy is a clear instance of benevolent sexism, where measures, though appearing protective, are rooted in paternalistic stereotypical assumptions about women's capabilities, portraying them as weaker and less reliable employees. This reinforces very biases that women have fought for decades to overcome and will inevitably lead to discrimination against women in hiring and promotion," it has been contended in the petition.

Emphasising that true workplace equality requires inclusive policies such as flexible work hours, hygienic facilities, and universal health support, rather than sex-specific distinctions, the petitioners feared the menstrual leave notification will hinder career progression and reinforce biases against women in the labour market.

The policy, by singling out women for a specific biological function and mandating leave, inadvertently labels them as less productive or more prone to absenteeism, thereby making them less productive candidates for employers in a highly competitive job market, it has been claimed in the petition.

Though Article 15(3) permits the State to make special provisions for women, such provisions must be in the nature of affirmative action to remedy historical disadvantage, the petitioners pointed out, and argued that "the present policy is not a protective measure, but a regressive one that patronises women."

KIA issues passenger advisory

BENGALURU: The Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) has issued a passenger advisory on the discontinuation of physical disembarkation cards for foreign nationals from April 1.

"Effective April 1, 2026, the physical disembarkation card will be discontinued. All foreign nationals are requested to complete the digitised e-Arrival card within 72 hours, prior to their arrival," the advisory said.

APPOINTMENT

ANDHRA UNIVERSITY
DPIIT - IPR Chair
Centre for Intellectual Property Rights
Visakhapatnam - 530001, India

EMPLOYMENT NOTIFICATION

Andhra University invites applications from Indian Nationals for the post of **IPR Chair Professor (01 position)** on contract basis under SPRIHA Scheme of DPIIT, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Govt. of India. For details like eligibility criteria, mode of selection and other details please visit **www.andhrauniversity.edu.in. Last Date for receipt of Application : 07-04-2026 @ 11:59 pm IST**

Sd/- Registrar

भारतीय सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान कोट्टयम
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY KOTTAYAM
(An Institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
Valavoor P.O, Pala, Kottayam (Dt), Kerala -686 635
Email : phdprogramme@iiitkottayam.ac.in

Advt. No:IIITK/01/12/2026/474 Date: 16.03.2026

Ph.D. ADMISSION – AUGUST 2026

Applications are invited for the **Ph. D. Programme** offered by the Institute commencing from **August 2026**.

Teaching Assistantship: Eligible full-time scholars may receive minimum of Rs. 25,000/- per month subject to the fulfillment of criteria and other conditions set by the Institute from time to time.

Apply Online: **https://phd.iiitkottayam.ac.in/**

Last date for receipt of application : **15th April 2026 [17:00 IST]**

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

भारतीय सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी संस्थान कोट्टयम
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY KOTTAYAM
(An Institution of National Importance under the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India)
Valavoor P.O, Pala, Kottayam (Dt), Kerala -686 635
Email : pgadmissions@iiitkottayam.ac.in

Advt. No:IIITK/01/12/2026/458 Date: 16.03.2026

e-M.Tech - AUGUST 2026

Applications are invited for the **e-M.Tech programme** offered by the Institute commencing from **August 2026**.

Courses offered:

- **Artificial Intelligence, Machine Learning and Data Science**
- **Cyber Security and Digital Forensics**

Mode of offering: - Hybrid (Online academic modules & end semester exam under offline mode).

Apply Online: **emtech.iiitkottayam.ac.in**

Last date for receipt of application : **16th April 2026 [17:00 IST]**

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath Chandrasekar (Responsible for selection of news under the PRP Act).
ISSN 0971 - 751X

Panic-buying triggers fuel shortage in State; Indian Oil promises adequate supply

Company says there is enough stock of petrol and diesel in Bengaluru and in all districts

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Amid instances of panic-buying at fuel stations in parts of Karnataka, Indian Oil Corporation Limited on Thursday promised the public that there is no shortage of petrol or diesel in the State and that supplies remain stable.

The company said adequate stock of both fuels are available across Bengaluru as well as in all districts of Karnataka, with supply to retail outlets continuing without disruption. All petroleum terminals and supply points, it added, are well stocked to meet current demand.

The clarification comes after an unusual surge in fuel purchases was reported in certain areas, affecting availability at a few outlets briefly. Indian Oil attributed this to panic-buying rather than any disruption in supply, and said deliveries to affected pumps are being prioritised. Inventory levels across fuel stations are also being closely monitored to restore normalcy.

Long queues were seen before petrol statoin in several districts of Karnataka. P.K BADIGER

Inventory levels across fuel stations are being closely monitored to restore normalcy

The company requested the public not to resort to panic-buying or hoarding, maintaining that the supply chain is functioning normally. It also warned against unsafe practices such as storing petrol in plastic cans or other unapproved containers, highlighting serious safety risks.

Siddharth Aggarwal, State Level Coordinator for the oil industry in Karnataka, said sufficient stocks are available across all public sector petroleum companies, including Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum. He added that supplies from refineries are continuing as usual, and production has been stepped up to ensure the uninterrupted availability of fuel across the State.

NHAI invites bids for ₹22.10 cr. service road project on Sira bypass

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has invited bids for the construction of two-lane service roads along the Sira bypass on NH-48 (Old NH-4) in Karnataka, in a move aimed at enhancing road safety and easing local traffic movement, according to officials.

The project, estimated to cost ₹22.10 crore, will be executed under the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) mode. A senior NHAI official said, "It involves building service roads for a total balance length of 3.23 km on either side of the bypass, along with necessary cross drainage structures."

According to NHAI, the initiative is designed to cater to the needs of local commuters while supporting the growing urbanisation of Sira town. "The addition of service roads is expected to segregate local and highway traffic, thereby reducing conflict points with fast-moving vehicles on the main carriageway," the official said.

The initiative is designed to cater to the needs of local commuters while supporting the growing urbanisation of Sira town, as per NHAI. PTI

The project will be awarded through a competitive bidding process. "This initiative reflects NHAI's continued commitment to strengthening road safety," said Vilas Brahmankar, Regional Officer, NHAI.

Women's Day celebrated at RRMCH

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Rajarajeshwari Group of Institutions and Sri Chamundeshwari Group of Institutions jointly celebrated Women's Day on RRMCH premises on Thursday, highlighting the importance of women's empowerment and equality.

Lalithalakshmi, chairperson of MCET, S. Vijayanand, executive director, and heads of various institutions attended the event. In her address, Ms. Lalithalakshmi underscored the strength and potential of women and reiterated the vision of Dr. A.C. Shanmugam, chairman, in promoting equal opportunities, noting that women constitute over 60% of the staff across the institutions. She encouraged women to aim higher and inspire future generations, stressing that empowerment is essential.

Actress Megha Shetty spoke about the role of education, personal development, and financial independence in empowering women.

City company duped of over ₹26 lakh

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Posing as Border Security Force (BSF) officials, conmen duped a Bengaluru-based firm of over ₹26 lakh by issuing a fake purchase order.

The firm, which imports and supplies hard plastic cases across India – including to defence organisations – received an enquiry on March 9 from a person identifying himself as Akshay Kumar, who claimed to be from the BSF Yelahanka purchase department.

The accused allegedly issued a purchase order on March 11, following which the firm shared a proforma invoice seeking a 50% advance payment.

Another person, identifying himself as Kuldeep Singh, contacted the complainant and stated that the payment would be processed as per the Indian Army procedure. Under this pretext, the accused instructed the complainant to make multiple bank transfers. They first carried out small "verification" transactions to win the victim's confidence.

In one instance, an amount of ₹4.48 lakh was briefly returned, further convincing the complainant of the transaction's authenticity. In total, ₹26,22,391 was fraudulently transferred before the accused disconnected communication. Realising the fraud, the complainant immediately alerted the Cyber Crime Helpline (1930) and submitted all transaction details.

ARMY PUBLIC SCHOOL
ASC CENTRE & COLLEGE AGRAM – POST, BANGALORE-560007
PHONE: 080 25550677
Website: www.apsasc.edu.in

TENDER NOTICE

Sealed Tenders are invited for Fixing of PPT interlocking tiles of thickness 15.70mm for basketball court – 4888 sq ft. Tender Enquiry/ Form to be collected from school office after payment of ₹1000/-(DD in favour of APS ASC Centre & College) till 13 Apr 26. Last date to submit filled tender form is 16 Apr 2026 at 1000 hrs.

P O / Member 1 for School Mgt

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank (A Government Of India Undertaking)
Mysuru Rural Regional Office, No. 26/A, 1st Floor, Guest House Road, Nazarbad, Mysore - 570010 Ph.: 0821-2568720, 2568200

SALE NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s particular that the under mentioned property mortgaged to **Canara Bank,** the possession of which had been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Bank under Section 13(4) of the Act will be sold by E-Auction as mentioned below for recovery of under mentioned dues and applicable interest, Charges and cost etc as detailed below.
The Property described below is being sold on **"AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", AND "WHATEVER THERE IS"** under rule no.8 & 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules (hereinafter referred to as the rules) for the recovery of the dues detailed as under:

Branch : Canara Bank, T. Narasipura Branch

Name and Address of the Borrower : 1. M/s P S A Metals, Door No. 393, 1st Floor, Shop No. 03, Sheru Circle, C K Road, Channapatna Town, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160, **2. Sri. Syed Nooruddin,** S/o Syed Yakub, Door No. 563, Kothanahalli, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagara District - 562160, **3. Smt. M Savitha,** D/o Mari Swamy, Site No. 472, Shivashakthi and Hardware, Dalavayi Agrahara, T. Narasipura Town, T. Narasipura Taluk, Mysuru District-571124, **Also at : 4. Smt. M Savitha,** W/o C M Prakash, Door No. 321, Dalavayi Agrahara, T. Narasipura Town & Taluk, Mysuru District-571124, **5. Sri. Shaik Mohammed Zeeshan,** S/o Asgar Ahmed, No. 653, Salamulla Road, Daira, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160, **6. Smt. Shafiya Mumtaz Bano** W/o Asgar Ahmed No. 653, Salamulla Road, Daira, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160, **Also at : 7. Smt. Shafiya Mumtaz Bano,** W/o Asgar Ahmed, No. 564, Ghanimiya Street, Daira, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160, **8. Sri. Syed Shamshuddin,** S/o M Syed Yakub, No. 564, Ghanimiya Street, Daira, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160, **9. Sri. Sheik Davud @ Asgar Ahmed,** S/o Mohammed Peer, No. 653, Salamulla Road, Daira, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160 **10. Sri. Mohsien Ali,** S/o Late Abbas Ali, 564, Ghanimiyan Street, Daira, Channapatna Taluk, Ramanagar District-562160, **11. Sri. C M Prakash,** S/o M Mahadevappa, Door No. 321, Dalavayi Agrahara, T. Narasipura Town & Taluk, Mysuru District-571124.
The Total Amount Due : Rs. 2,01,07,531/- (Rupees Two Crore One Lakh Seven Thousand Five Hundred Thirty One Only) as on 23-03-2026. together with further interest, costs and expenses and charges due to **Canara Bank, T. Narasipura Branch.**

DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

Property No. 1 :
Name of the title holder : Sri. Sheik Davud @ Asgar Ahmed, S/o Mohammed Peer
(as per the gift deed Document No. CAN-1-02607-2007-08, CD No. CAND35, Dated 14-01-2008 at Channapatna Sub-Registrar Office)
All that piece and parcel of the Commercial Land and Building, Muncipal Khata No. 1897, Muncipal Old Property No. 1530/1, PID No. 26-1-10-26, **Measuring East to West on the 6.47 Meters, on the South 7.62 Meters, North to South on the East 17.68 Meter, on the West 12.65 Meter (6.47+7.62 X 17.68+12.65 Meters),** Property Situated at Ward No. 26, Sathanur Road, Munciapl 'B' Division, Channapatna Town, Ramanagara District. **Property Bounded by : East By:** RCC Building belongs to S Mohammed, **West By :** Property of Syed Naziulla, **North By :** Property of Shah Mohammed, **South By :** Sathanur Road.
Known encumbrances, if any: Not to the knowledge of the Bank

Property No. 2 :
Name of the title holder : Sri. Sheik Davud @ Asgar Ahmed, S/o Mohammed Peer
All that piece and parcel of the Residential Land and Building, Muncipal Khata No. 822, Old Property No.767/652/653, PID No.24-1-127-13, **Measuring East to West 7.62 Meters and 6.09 Meters, North to South 16.76 Meters and 3.96 Meters (7.62 & 6.09 X 16.76 & 3.96 Meter),** Property Situated at Door No. 13, Ward No. 24, between B.M. Road and old Mandipete Road, Block 1 (Salamulla Beedhi), Channapatna Town , Ramanagara District. **Property Bounded by East By:** Road, **West By:** 24-1-127-11, **North By:** 24-1-507-6B, **South By:** 24-1-127-Road.
Known encumbrances, if any: Not to the knowledge of the Bank

Property No. 3 :
Name of the title holder : Sri. C M Prakash, S/o M Mahadevappa
(as per the registered sale deed Document No. TNP-1-03994-2015-16, CD No. TNPD86, Dated 31-12-2015 at T. Narasipura Sub-Registrar Office, T. Narasipura)
A) All that piece and parcel of the Commercial Land and Building property Khata Assessment No. 316, Madapura Village, Janger No. 516, Property No:152200702510220058, **Measuring East to West 51.816 Meters, North to South 54.8640 Meters. Total area measuring of 2842.83 Square Meters.**
B) All that piece and parcel of the Commercial Property Khata Assessment No.316, Madapura Village, Janger No. 516, Property No: 152200702510220053, **Measuring East to West 21.3360 Meter, North to South 36.576 Meters, Total area of 780.39 Square Meters.** Property Situated at Madapura Village, Talakadu Hobli, T Narasipura Taluk, Mysuru District - 571124. **Property Bounded by East By:** Own site & Property of Madashetty, **West By :** Property of Biligiri, **North By :** Talakadu Road, **South By :** Property of M. Mahadevaiah (M. Mahadevappa)
Known encumbrances, if any: Not to the knowledge of the Bank

Property No. 4 :
Name of the title holder : Smt. M Savitha, W/o C M Prakash
(as per the registered sale deed Document No. TNP-1-02491-2012-13, CD No. TNPD54, Dated 20-07-2012 at T. Narasipura Sub-Registrar Office, T. Narasipura)
A) All that piece and parcel of the Residential Land and Building, Property Khata Assessment/Site No. 472/476/434, **Measuring East to West 50 Feet, North to South 18 Feet (50X18).**
B) All that piece and parcel of the Residential Land and Building, Property Khata Assessment/Site No. 473/477/435, **Measuring East to West 50 Feet, North to South 19¾ Feet (50X19¾).**
C) All that piece and parcel of the Residential Land and Building, Property Khata Assessment/Site No. 474/478/436, **Measuring East to West 50 Feet, North to South 19¾ Feet (50X19¾).**
Property Situated at Dalavayi Agrahara, T. Narasipura Town, T. Narasipur a Taluk, Mysuru District-571124. **Property Bounded by East By:** Property of Nandish, **West By:** Road, **North By:** House of Gopalaraya, **South By:** House of Subramanyabhat
Known encumbrances, if any: Not to the knowledge of the Bank
The details regarding E-Auction are Mentioned below:

DATE & TIME OF E-AUCTION		RESERVE PRICE	EMD AMOUNT
08-05-2026 11.30 am to 12.30 pm	Property No. 1	Rs. 61,15,000/-	Rs. 6,11,500/-
	Property No. 2	Rs. 75,50,000/-	Rs. 7,55,000/-
	Property No. 3	Rs. 2,01,35,000/-	Rs. 20,13,500/-
	Property No. 4	Rs. 1,35,25,000/-	Rs. 13,52,500/-
BID FACTOR	Property No. 1-2	Rs. 50,000/-	
	Property No. 3-4	Rs. 2,00,000/-	
DATE AND TIME OF INSPECTION	Property No. 1-2	ON 05-05-2026 from 10.00 am to 02.00 pm.	
	Property No. 3-4	ON 06-05-2026 from 10.00 am to 02.00 pm.	
EMD Amount Payment		ON/BEFORE 06-05-2026 UPTO 4 PM	

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale please refer the link "E-Auction" provided in Canara Bank's website **(www.canarabank.com)** or E-Wallet of **M/s PSB Alliance Private Limited (https://baanknet.com/)** portal and may contact Authorised officer, **Sri Harish Kumar, Mysuru Rural Regional Office, No. 26/A, 1st Floor, Guest House Road, Nazarbad, Mysore-570010 Ph. No. 0821-2568720 Mobile: 9449860457 E.mail: romys2rec@ canarabank.com OR the service provider Baanknet (M/s PSB Alliance Pvt. Ltd), (Contact No. 7046612345/6354910172/ 8291220220/ 9892219848/ 8160205051, Email: support. BAANKNET@psballiance.com/ support.ebkray@procure247.com) may be** contacted during office hours on any working days.

Date : 27-03-2026
Place : Mysuru
Sd/- Authorised Officer Canara Bank

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is brought to the notice of General Public that our Client is intending to purchase immovable property bearing No.172, Khatha No. 5525, New Khatha No. 1889733329, E Khatha No. 150200301100131506, formed in converted **Sy No. 112/2 & 112/3,** situated at Doddathoguru Village, Begur Hobli, BSTQ, Bangalore, measuring E-W: 40 ft & N-S: 30 ft, totally measuring 1200 sq ft, along with building standing thereon and bounded on the East By : Site No. 187, West By: Road, North by : Site No.171, South by : Site No. 173, from its owners **1) PRASANNA PRABHAKARREDDY W/o., V. Kirankumar, 2) VADDIPALLI KIRANKUMAR** S/o., V. Rajareddy, No. 1-5, Jilledupalli Back side of Muthyalamma Temple, Chitoor, A.P-5174165. Any person/s having objections to the said transactions can register their claim/s with documentary evidence with the undersigned within **15 days** of publication hereof, failing which, our client will proceed with the transactions and any claim/s received thereafter will not be entertained.

H.V.NAVEEN KUMAR RAO & H.V.SUNIL KUMAR RAO
ADVOCATES
No. 57, 1st Floor, Veerapillai Street, Bengaluru-01 **Mobile: 9341380225**

केनरा बैंक Canara Bank (A Government Of India Undertaking)
Regional Office, No.26/A, 2nd Floor, Guest House Road, Nazarbad, Mysore-570010 Mob.: 77601 73892 Email : mysrec@canarabank.com

DEMAND NOTICE [SECTION 13(2)]

We, Canara Bank, had issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Security Interest Act 2002 by Registered Post with Acknowledgment Due (RPAD) to the addresses furnished to the Bank as mentioned below. The contents of the said notices are mentioned herein below.

Branch : K.R. Circle

Name And Address Of The Borrowers/ Co-borrowers / Mortgagors / Guarantors : 1. M/s River View Valley Resort, No.13/2, Sumukha Apartment, F1 KHB Colony, 3rd Main Road, 1st Phase, Basaveshwaranagara, Bangalore Karnataka– 560 079, **2. Smt. Shanthala** W/o D Muniraju No 13 Old No 46 Sumukha Apartment, No. F 1 3rd Main Road 1st Stage KHB Colony, Bengaluru North, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560079, **3. Mr. Tejas D M** S/o D Muniraju, No 13 Sumukha Apartment, F No 1 K H B Colony, Basaveshwarnagar, Bangalore North, Bangalore, Karnataka 560 079 , **4. Mr. Jayanth D M** S/o D Muniraju, No 13 Old No 46 Sumukha Apartment, F No 1 K H B Colony, Basaveshwarnagar, Bangalore North , Bangalore, Karnataka - 560 079, **5. Mrs. Kusuma D M** D/o D Muniraju, No 13 Old No 46 Sumukha Apartment, F No 1 K H B Colony, Basaveshwarnagar, Bangalore North, Bangalore, Karnataka -560 079

[Details of the credit facility/ies availed by the Borrower]

Loan No.	Nature of Loan	Date of Sanction	Limit	Liability with interest	Rate of Interest
170001 082201	MSME-Term Loan	13-10-2021	Rs. 4,50,00,000.00	Rs. 3,78,29,527.98/-	14.00% + 2% Penal interest

Total Liability Amount : **Rs. 3,78,29,527.98/- (Rupees Three Crores Seventy Eight Lakhs Twenty Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Twenty Seven and Ninety Eight Paise Only)** with further cost and charges, Interest and incidental expenses and costs.
NPA Date : 13-03-2026 **Demand Notice Dated : 24-03-2026**
Name of Title holder : SMT. SHANTHALA W/O D MUNIRAJU
Equitable Mortgage of Immovable : All that piece and parcel of Commercial Site Property bearing No. 944 PID No. 152100601900120292 Carved out of Survey Nos. 242 and 288, Situated at Chikkayarahalli Village, Katteri Village Panchayath, Chinakuruli Hobli, Pandavapura Taluk Mandya District, **Measuring East to West 157.2615 Meters & North to South 121.2646 Meters, in all measuring 19070.11 square meters. Bounded by : East by –** Property No. 239 & 238; **West by –** Property No. 241; **North by-** Road; **South by –** Property No. 241 & 243.

You are here by called upon to pay **Canara Bank**, within a period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice, the respective amount mentioned here above, failing which **Canara Bank** will take necessary action under the provisions of the said Act, against the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the Borrowers and the Guarantors. The powers available to **Canara Bank** under the Act include (i) power to take possession of the secured assets of the Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagors including the rights to transfer by way of lease, assignment or sale for realising secured assets and any transfer of secured assets by **Canara Bank** shall vest in the transferee rights in or in relation to, the secured asset transferred as if the transfer has been made by you. In terms of the provisions of section 13(13) of the said Act, you are hereby prohibited from transferring, either by way of sale, lease or otherwise (other than in the ordinary course of your business), any of the secured assets as referred to in the Demand Notice affixed and also Hypothecated / Mortgaged to the bank without prior written consent of the Bank. The notice is issued in terms of Section (13)2 of the said Act.

Date : 27-03-2026
Place : Mysuru
Sd/- Authorised Officer Canara Bank

TOWN MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, HANGAL

NoTMC/HNL/Eng/SFCspl//Vahi/2025-26 Date:25-03-2026

Tender Notification

Karnataka Municipal Act 1964 Karnataka Public on behalf of the Governor of the State As per Procurement Transparency Act 2000 As per 2022-23 SFC Special grant Scheme for Rs.130.00 Lakhs Estimated Paper Prepared E-Procurement Tenders from Eligible Contractors in Single Envelope/Two-Envelope Mode KW-2 tenders are invited from qualified grade contractors registered with the Locopayogi Department and e-procurement portal for kppp-procurement tender documents through departmental website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/ to apply online on the date mentioned below. **(KPPP-Procurment)**

Sl No	INDENT No	Estimate Value (in Lakhs)	EMD Amount	Reservation	NIT Published Date	Last Date Tender Closure
1	DMA/2023-24/RD/WORK_ INDENT17252/CALL-2 (SFC Spl Others)	8000000.00	160000.00	Gen	23-03-2026	06-04-2026
2	DMA/2023-24/RD/WORK_ INDENT17264/CALL-2 (SFC Spl (Others)	5000000.00	125000.00	Gen	23-03-2026	06-04-2026

DIPR/Haveri/KSMCA/849/2025-26

Sd/-The Chief Officer, TMC, Hangal

AXIS BANK LIMITED Public Notice for – Auction of pledged assets being Gold Ornaments

The Borrowers, in specific and the public in general are here buy notified that public auction of the gold ornaments pledge in the below accounts is proposed to be conducted by the Axis Bank at the below mentioned Branch.

That the below mentioned Borrowers has availed the credit facility from the **Axis Bank Limited** against the pledge of gold ornaments ("Gold Loan Facility") in favour of the Bank towards the security. The Demand notices were issued to the Borrowers/Guarantors calling up the Borrowers/Guarantors to pay their outstanding amount towards the Gold loan facility availed. As the Borrowers/Guarantors have failed to repay the outstanding loan amount, the bank is constrained to invoke the pledge and proposed to conduct an auction sale of pledged gold ornaments more particularly described in schedule of property hereunder on **27.04.2026 at 11.00 AM on "As in where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there is" and "No Recourse Basis".** Auction will be held at.

Details of Borrowers and outstanding amount

Custmer Name	Loan A/C No.	Outstanding Amount (₹.)	Date of Recall Notice	Gross Weight	Net Weight
Branch Name : Channapatna					
Varshini S	XXXXXXXXXXX1366	1029433.00	9-Feb-26	120.700	119.980
Branch Name : Chintamani					
Bhagymma	XXXXXXXXXXX6242	1858244.00	16-Feb-26	287.200	282.000
Branch Name : Indiranagar, Bangalore					
Channappa K S	XXXXXXXXXXX9698	3069648.21	19-Dec-25	618.800	613.200
Branch Name : J P Nagar, Bangalore					
Farhan K H	XXXXXXXXXXX7477	1824906.00	10-Dec-25	291.500	288.800
Wajith .	XXXXXXXXXXX0621	184481.00	30-Jan-25	39.000	38.000
Raghunatharaddi Kalawad	XXXXXXXXXXX2287	129999.00	9-Feb-26	24.900	24.200
Branch Name : Kolar					
Afreed Pasha	XXXXXXXXXXX1760	230622.45	9-Feb-26	34.200	33.100
Afreed Pasha	XXXXXXXXXXX5905	57620.00	16-Feb-26	17.900	15.900
Israr Pasha	XXXXXXXXXXX6574	1036775.00	9-Feb-26	132.100	127.600
Roopesh Sharma S N	XXXXXXXXXXX4444	131612.00	6-Aug-22	22.900	20.000
Branch Name : Koramangala, Bangalore					
Kundeti Jyothi	XXXXXXXXXXX4479	1309963.99	10-Jan-26	223.800	206.100
Branch Name : Vijayanagar Bangalore					
P R Umapathi	XXXXXXXXXXX6417	1239390.77	9-Feb-26	190.400	174.700
Branch Name : Sarjapur Road, Bangalore					
Lokesh C S	XXXXXXXXXXX4891	102515.08	9-Feb-26	20.900	20.100
M Godwin Nathan	XXXXXXXXXXX0178	98566.61	18-Jun-22	40.300	28.000
Manisha Dubey	XXXXXXXXXXX4881	1137091.55	6-Nov-25	181.300	179.400
Vasantha G	XXXXXXXXXXX9168	352168.00	10-Dec-25	58.800	56.800
Y S Viswanath	XXXXXXXXXXX6196	386417.00	27-Oct-25	55.800	55.000

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF TENDER

The Base/Reserve price will be given on the auction day/date to the tenderers on which the auction bid will be considered. The bid/offers in the prescribed tender form provided by the bank shall only be considered for bidding.
Incomplete bid form/tender are treated invalid and shall liable to be rejected.
The tender documents along with the terms and conditions shall be collected from the above branch. The tender document duly completed to be handed to the concerned branch official during working hours on **27.04.2026.** Tenders received after the due date will not be considered.
The said properties is / are offered for sale on **"As in where is", "As is what is", "Whatever there is" and "No Recourse Basis".**
The Bank does not undertake any responsibility to standard, purity and /or any other dues, taxes, if any, in respect of the said property.
Tenders will be opened by the Bank on the auction date in the presence of the tenderers who may choose to remain present on the day and time as said above, inter alia, for raising / revising their respective offers.
Branch Names Mentioned Above. Auction Date : 27.04.2026
Offer/tender once submitted cannot be withdrawn and bidder will liable to deposit the bid amount if there is single bid/offer for particular article/asset/ornament.
If there are more than one bid for particular article/asset/ornament, inter-se bidding shall take place amongst the bidder and highest bidder shall be declare as successful bidder.
Bidder should submit all KYC documents i.e. PAN Number, PAN Card, Adhar Card & Address proof etc. Bidder should submit valid E-mail ID & Contact Number
The Bank reserves its right to accept or reject the offer at its sole discretion.
Any disputes / differences arising out of sale of the said property/ offered for sale shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of Courts / Tribunals at Mumbai only.

Place: Karnataka
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Hon'ble Prime Minister

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A BG-BGE

The Bill not only narrows the definition of 'transgender person' to those with socio-cultural identities, but also includes persons with intersex variations or other congenital traits into this definition. K.MURALI KUMAR

Rolling back rights

Karnataka has played a significant role in shaping India's gender minorities rights movement, with activists, lawyers and groups laying the groundwork. **Shilpa Elizabeth** talks to the community that feels The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill undoes some of the gains of the struggle

Christy Raj, a Bengaluru-based trans rights activist, says he was glued to the screen on the March 24 and 25.

"I barely moved, as if an IPL match was on. Except that this time, it was the Parliament debates on the Trans Bill 2026 on the screen," he says.

The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, which limits the definition of "transgender person" to socio-cultural identities and intersex variations at birth and deprives gender minorities of the right to self-declare their identities, has triggered uproar, caused severe anxiety for the community and poses a huge question mark over their identities.

Much to the dread of many like Raj, Parliament passed the Bill on March 25, 2026, in a huge setback to decades of struggle. When a proposed law itself risks invalidating the dignity and erasing sections of the community, they ask, what justice remains for an already marginalised, stigmatised and deeply persecuted group.

> The Bill gives no clarity and pushes already vulnerable people into more vulnerability
>
> **NATHAAN,** Trans right activist

Karnataka scenario

According to the 2011 Census, Karnataka is home to 20,266 transgender persons. Even this figure is widely acknowledged as a significant undercount. Yet, based on these numbers alone, Karnataka ranks among the States with the highest proportion of transgender persons relative to its population. This also means that the impact of the Bill is likely to be pronounced in States like Karnataka.

The trans-legal battle in India has been a long-drawn one, with the law often taking gingerly, slow and reactive steps to recognise the rights of the gender minorities.

Karnataka has played a significant role in shaping India's gender minorities rights movement, with activists, lawyers and community groups laying the groundwork, building public opinion and contributing to some of the key legal milestones.

For example, Sangama was one of the earliest organisations to document instances of violence and police brutality against gender minorities.

In 2004, Kokila, an individual belonging to hijra community, was gang-raped by a group of men in Bengaluru. When she went to the police station seeking help, she was reportedly detained, abused and sexually assaulted again by police personnel. What this exposed was the social as well as institutional violence inflicted upon transgender communities.

Kokila, in 2006, filed an affidavit as part of the Delhi High Court proceedings in the Naz Foundation Vs. Government of NCT of Delhi which challenged Section 377 of the IPC. As the case moved to Supreme Court, Kokila's affidavit became part of the larger body of material and arguments used to build the case in the apex court.

"In 2008, we held a huge rally in Bengaluru against Section 377, in which around 2,000 people participated. Then there was no looking back," recalls Manohar Elavarthi, who founded Sangama in 1999.

Akkai Padmashali, who initially worked with Sangama and later founded Ondede, emerged as an important figure from the community in the organised fight for transgender rights during the same period. Petitions filed by Padmashali, among other petitions, became crucial in the reading down of Section 377.

Around the same time, organisations like Alternative Law Forum (ALF) started supporting gender minorities navigate the legal system and helped build legal arguments that connected gender identity to constitutional rights and dignity

Other community-led organisations and coalitions such as Samara, Aneka, Raahi, KSMF, Solidarity, Okoota, Jeeva, Swatantra, CSGMR and MGSP, and several individuals from the State, have also been crucial in voicing concerns of the working class people of the transgender community and pushing for policy actions.

"The leadership in gender and sexual minorities movements in most cities is English-speaking middle or upper class. In Karnataka, the leaders are predominantly from the working class, so working class issues are at the forefront. That, I think, is the biggest strength of the movement in Karnataka," says Elavarthi.

Yet another aspect that stands out is how the movement has picked up in smaller towns beyond Bengaluru, even if in smaller numbers. Soon after the Bill was introduced in Parliament, protests were held in at least eights districts in Karnataka.

State policy and quota

The efforts across decades have borne fruit too. In 2017, Karnataka introduced its State Policy on Transgender Persons and in 2021 became the first State in India to introduce a 1% reservation for transgender individuals in government jobs.

On a national level, the NALSA Vs. Union of India judgment in 2014 recognised the right of transgender persons to self-identify their gender. In 2018, the Supreme Court struck down Section 377. This was followed by the enactment of the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019, which, despite its shortcomings, marked a significant legislative step.

But rather than building on and addressing the gaps in the existing Act, the new Bill seeks to roll back years of progress secured through sustained struggle by the community, say the activists.

The Bill not only narrows the definition of "transgender person" to those with socio-cultural identities such as kinner, hijra, aravani, jogta, or eunuch, and persons forced to assume a transgender identity through mutilation or castration, but also folds persons with intersex variations or other congenital traits into this definition. Further, it specifically excludes persons with different sexual orientations and self-perceived sexual identities.

Currently, a transgender person can obtain legal recognition through self-declaration via an affidavit submitted to the District Magistrate (DM), without any requirement of medical examination. The proposed amendment, however, mandates a government-appointed Medical Board to provide recommendations to the DM before granting approval.

Despite wide and vehement opposition, the Bill was passed by Parliament.

Overlooking nuances

The pressing question now is what happens to those left outside the government's definitions – those from regional identities, trans women beyond traditional frameworks, and trans men who do not fall within any of the traditional socio-cultural identities.

Karnataka is home to regional identities such as jogamma, jogappa, mangalamukhi, marladi, kothi, shivshakti and so on. Arvind Narrain, lawyer and founding member of ALF, points out that some States, like Kerala, have no traditional transgender identities. The Bill, however, overlooks such regional nuances. Akkai Padmashali terms this a disrespect to cultures and identities other than the ones mentioned in the Bill, and to individuals like her.

Raj notes that even if one belongs to a category mentioned in the Bill, they need to prove their identity in front of a medical board now, which is a violation of personal liberty and contradictory to the NALSA judgment.

Then there is the case of transmen whose existence the Bill has entirely refused to acknowledge. "Within the larger transgender community itself, transmen are the most invisible. There are no traditional communities or cultural backup for them," says Astha Kalarikkal, executive director at Raahi.

Nathaan, a trans right activist, says he gets several panic calls everyday from people asking what will happen to their existing transgender cards, pending applications, surgeries, and changes in other government documents. "The Bill gives no clarity and pushes already vulnerable people into more vulnerability," he says.

"This is clearly a Bill rooted in Hindutva notions," adds Raj.

Much to the chagrin of the community, the Bill also uses the term "eunuch" among the definitions, which has been historically used to dehumanise and humiliate the community.

Criminalisation

One of the offences mentioned in the Bill is to unduly influence, coerce, force or entice a person into performing amputation, mutilation, surgical intervention, or emasculation to assume a transgender identity against their will. This will warrant a minimum of rigorous imprisonment for 10 years and maximum of imprisonment for life.

But in the case of gender minorities, many, on revealing their identities, are either forced out of their homes or subject to physical and mental harassment by their families. Eventually, many of them seek the help of communities and support groups and join the groups with the help of the community elders.

Under the new Bill, all of this could be interpreted as enticement or undue violence, points out Narrain.

"You cannot just get any person on the street and entice them. But the Bill speaks about criminalisation. Criminalisation of who? It could be any person who helps in any way, support organisations, law-based organisations or traditional communities," he says.

Improvements needed

Activists like Raj feel that the Union government has often turned a blind eye to the community members in the South. While the Centre has rolled out the SMILE scholarship scheme for transgender students, not a single person from Bengaluru who applied for it have received it so far, he alleges.

In Karnataka, the government introduced the State Policy on Transgender Persons in 2017 and became the first State to introduce 1% reservation in government jobs for transgender individuals. The Mythri pension scheme for transgender persons was launched by the Karnataka government around 2012-13.

According to government sources, while around 35,000 people avail themselves of the Mythri pension, the 1% reservation has not found much success. As per the figures revealed by Home Minister G. Parameshwara recently, the horizontal reservation has led to four selections in the Home Department.

The Karnataka government undertook a first of its kind survey of gender minorities in the State in 2025. A report prepared after the survey recommended free coaching for competitive exams, skill development and employment training and dedicated education support systems for transgender individuals. A dedicated transgender welfare board has also been a long-pending demand of the community. However, the Karnataka Budget saw no such announcements.

Continuing the fight

While the strong resistance from the State is a reflection of how Karnataka's gender and sexual minorities movement has evolved and strengthened over the years, the community members feel that they are at a juncture where the fight, even for basics such as being treated with dignity and on par with others, seems far from over.

"We will not sit quietly. We are all set to file a petition before the Supreme Court," says Padmashali. The SC-appointed committee led by Asha Menon, in which Padmashali is a member, has also passed a resolution against the Bill that was introduced without consulting the National Council for Transgender Persons.

Raj demands that the Karnataka goverment must ensure that, if the Act is passed, the law is not implemented in the State.

Activists also question the Union government's rationale behind the Bill, which is 'prevention of misuse of schemes and protection of genuine transgender persons who face discrimination.' "The 2011 Census shows close to 5 lakh transgender individuals. Only around 30,000 transgender cards have been availed so far. So, what misuse are they referring to?" Narrain wonders.

Elavarthi argues that invasion of personal space is typical to the right wing. "They want to police what I eat, what I wear, my body, my relationship, my identity, when the reality is that everyone, even the cis heterosexual people, fall in a spectrum."

Slow boil The Middle Room, The Conservatory and Coracle (dish shown below) all began in incubators. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Incubating ideas

Culinary incubation spaces are giving diners a glimpse of what is to come, while providing fully loaded platforms to entrepreneurs testing concepts

Ruth D'Souza Prabhu

Around a decade ago, Priya M, a Bengaluru-based lawyer, was introduced to home chef Tresa Francis' Travancore Tasties. The home-style Kerala Syrian Christian food Tresa cooked was just what Priya's family needed whilst she juggled a hectic career and caring for elderly parents. Priya turned to Tresa for regular deliveries, and soon, "her food became part of all family dinners and celebratory events," she says.

For Tresa, such word-of-mouth references helped grow her business, encouraging her to take it to a cloud kitchen model in 2021. One thing Tresa was sure about, though, was that she did not want to open a restaurant. That changed in 2024.

Here is why. Bangalore International Centre (BIC) is a privately-enabled public space that facilitates conversations around arts and culture. "While innovating our programming on sensory-led mind and soul experiences, we thought of an incubation space for promising home chefs that would help them open their own restaurants," says V Ravichandar, Board Member.

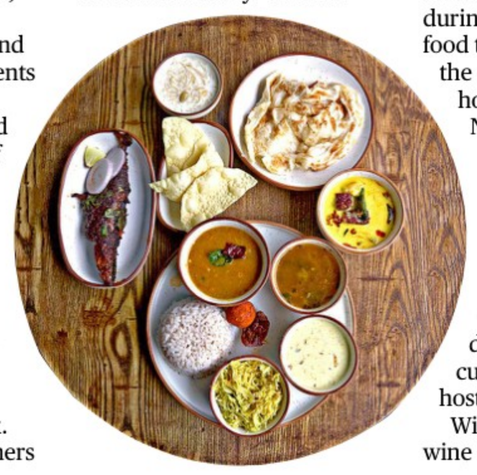
BIC began with Nāvu in 2021, which went independent in one-and-a-half years. Next came Podi and Spice with Divya Prabhakar, who handled the business aspect, and Tresa as the home chef. "When Tresa decided to chart her own path, BIC gave her the platform to test-run Coracle, which was born in July 2024," says Ravichandar.

BIC provides the space and a fully-fitted kitchen. Payments to BIC are based on the monthly business generated by the restaurant instead of a fixed rental or overhead. This helps reduce risks for first-time entrepreneurs, believes Ravichandar.

Ideas abound

Culinary incubation spaces may be few, but they are transforming how diners engage with food and drink. These formats give both diners and innovators a dynamic way to explore new ideas.

"When the Smash Guys were planning their burger restaurant in Bengaluru, they did a one-month residency at The Conservatory. On offer were burgers such as the oyster mushroom karaage, the Oklahoma smash, the eight-hour braised brisket, the Flintstone with torched bone marrow and more," explains Akhila Srinivas, founder, Courtyard and The Conservatory.



The Courtyard was always an incubation space for music, dance and theatre. However, during COVID-19 (and later), food took precedence, with the first experiments and home deliveries of Naru Noodle Bar, Nāvu, Klaa Kitchen, and creations by Chef Karan Upmanyu, all happening from the Courtyard kitchen.

Soon came The Conservatory - a dedicated and popular culinary pop-up space that hosts several chefs.

Wine in Progress (W.I.P), a wine dive bar with Japanese small plates, and The Middle Room, a vinyl listening bar, are both Courtyard's in-house properties that emerged from its incubation ecosystem.

Instilling confidence

As a customer, Abhishek Gupta, says, "I owe so much of my current love for exploring food to places like The Conservatory and Tijouri (at the Radisson Blu Atria)." Tijouri hosts pop-ups once a month, with each edition curated around a specific micro-cuisine or theme with a home chef.

Home chef Shelly Tripathy of Elaach experienced that confidence first-hand through her Tijouri pop-ups. "It helps us understand what it takes to open a restaurant or a cloud kitchen," she says. Her Banaras-style kachori, Oriya vada ghugni and Kashi-style lachha rabri became points of validation. "Diners connected with me, through my food," she says, adding that the incubation has clarified her path – a cloud kitchen next, and later, a small café.

Going spirit-forward is The Good Craft Co. (TGCC), Diageo India's first sensorial Experience Home in Bengaluru. On weekdays, it functions as an R&D hub for Diageo's portfolio and as an open platform where start-ups, mixologists and other professionals can experiment with ideas, access equipment, and tap into technical guidance to refine or scale early liquid concepts.

On weekends, their Flavour Lab opens to consumers for a three-hour, on-the-house session that traces the history of Indian craft through a grain-to-glass journey of a chosen spirit.

"With disposable incomes going up, people are discerning of what they want to consume, and the experiences they want as part of the consumption story," says Vikram Damodaran, Chief Innovation Officer, Diageo India.

Many a culinary concept remains a dream for fear that it just may not click. Incubation centres with their strong consumer-facing, fully equipped platforms, ensure a safe space for these to be tested for market readiness.

Stark, dark and revealing

Gautham Manohar hopes his photographs serve as reminders of the Earth's delicate beauty

Bleak beauty Bones of a Kiang from Dreams, Places and the Spaces in Between. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Ruth Dhanaraj
ruth.dhanaraj@thehindu.co.in

"In almost all my photographs I do not specify the exact location for two reasons. First, I do not want it to become part of a bucket list where people feel they have to go, as that is contrary to what I am trying to achieve," says Gautham Manohar.

"Next, when I photograph a hill, lake or forest, it represents all of Nature, not a just specific spot. It stands for all the beauty that exists in places like this."

Dreams, Places and the Spaces in Between, an upcoming exhibition of photographs by Gautham, aims to showcase India's natural beauty as well as its fragile existence, courtesy mankind's avarice and apathy.

The photographer, who is now based out of New Delhi, hopes to promote conservation and increase people's commitment and passion for Nature with his photographs, "especially in India" as he believes social development trumps conservation here.

He explains, "A big part of social development is tourism and conservation is rarely talked about. As a result, most of our beautiful tourist hotspots, especially the ones that are easily accessible, have become terribly overrun. Mass tourism has made a severe dent, particularly in North India."

"Expert ecologists say the water situation is never going to get resolved and now, landslides have become a recurring issue. I believe greater urgency should be shown in preserving the very places we wish to visit and promote."

Though a majority of Gautham's work is in black and white, he says it is not intentional. "It presents a range of possibilities and helps convey the mood in a way that is personal to the viewer."

Dreams, Places and the Spaces in Between by Gautham Manohar will be on display at Bangalore International Centre from March 27 to 29. Entry free. Details of his work and shows on @only1Ofineart

Bridge over troubled borders

Follower dives into the heated border dispute between Karnataka and Maharashtra in Belagavi while tackling the messy world of social media and its impact on friendships

Vivek MV
vivek.mv@thehindu.co.in

In an engaging post-film interaction, director Harshad Nalawade patiently responded to questions and reactions to his film, *Follower*. The Kannada-Marathi film was recently screened at Bengaluru's Suchitra Cinema and Cultural Academy. Incidentally, the special screening took place exactly a year after its theatrical show was halted by activists in Belagavi.

Harshad's film overcame theatrical disruptions and censorship hurdles to find a home on the streaming platform MUBI. *Follower* is a relevant today more than ever, and the passionate discussion at Suchitra, was proof. "It's a beautiful and rewarding experience to interact with your audience," Harshad says.

Follower is a stunning drama on the long-standing border issue between Karnataka and Maharashtra in Belagavi. The film lays bare the harsh realities of social media trolls. It is a moving yet realistic character study of Raghavendra Pawar (a superb Raghu Prakash), whose life and dreams slowly fall apart against political disputes, strained relationships with parents and siblings, and an aimless career path.

Mirror, mirror Raghu Prakash in a still from *Follower*, Harshad Nalawade (below). SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

"*Follower* is about a few friends of mine. I wanted to make a movie about a guy with strong beliefs. I wanted to know what led him to support and defend a particular ideology," explains Harshad. "Here is a guy who believes in half-truths and gets brainwashed. However, what convinced him to latch onto an ideology? That's the core of my story," he adds.

The 100-minute film is a balanced reflection of the prevailing political tensions where the characters are not judged harshly but portrayed as vulnerable beings. *Follower* calls for unity in the face of rampant hate. For Harshad, it was an honest expression of his strong feelings.

"My father is a Kannadiga, and my mother is a Maharashtrian. I grew up listening to Kannada songs of Dr. Rajkumar and Marathi songs of Lata Mangeshkar. The constant language shifting was a daily scenario for me. I grew up loving both languages and always wondered why there was animosity between these two linguistic groups," he says.

"If a Marathi-speaking person in Belagavi is surrounded by the Marathi community, then he is stuck in an echo chamber. You want to believe what your people say. The same theory applies to a Kannada-speaking person surrounded by the Kannada community. This leads to the divide," he adds.

Artistic liberty is facing a serious threat thanks to harsh censorship rules in the country. At the screening, the filmmaker revealed the censor board's ironic demand to mute the words 'Kannada' and 'Marathi' in *Follower*.

Harshad argues that the primary duty of the board is to provide a censor certificate and not to tell the filmmaker what to show. "People in the censor board aren't suggesting cuts based on their intelligence. They are controlling films based on what the majority of the nation believes. It's scary and unacceptable," he opines.

Harshad is currently writing his second feature film. "My stories will continue to come from North Karnataka and South Maharashtra. Mainstream cinema has portrayed people from that region as caricatures. In reality, there is so much more to people from that region."

Follower is currently streaming on MUBI

STEPOUT

Laughter that heals

A medical clowning workshop with Happy Uncle, one of India's leading medical clowns, known for bringing moments of joy and emotional ease to patients, will be held. The workshop will explore how humour, play, and compassion can be used to build connection and support well-being, and is relevant for healthcare professionals, therapists and facilitators, among others.
At Charista Foundation, Kalyan Nagar on April 5, between 9am and 6pm. Call 8015144657 for details.

Shop sustainably

The 18th edition of Namu Recommends Vegan Market will return to the city this weekend. The event will bring together over 130 vegan and sustainable brands from across India, spanning food, fashion, wellness, home and lifestyle. Apart from shopping, guests can indulge at food stalls and engaging activities for children.
At Chamara Vajra, Jayamahal Main Rd on March 28 and 29, between 12 and 8pm. Call 9148253622 for details.

Underlying tones

Organised by the Aalekh Arts and Culture Foundation, Shades of Grey, is an ongoing art exhibition by Divyaman Singh. The artist, whose preferred medium is oil on canvas, has depicted the emotions of women through a series of abstract works. Portion of proceeds from the show will support vocational training programmes for women.
Till March 28 at Sabha Blr, from 11.30am to 7pm.

Govt. announces 60-day relaxation in age for 2026-27 class 1 admissions

Presently, a child must be 6 years by June 1 of the academic year to be eligible for class 1; under the changed rules, a child who is 5 years and 10 months by June 1 will be eligible for admission

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Following pressure from parents, the Karnataka government on Thursday announced a 60-day relaxation in the age eligibility criteria for class 1 admissions for the 2026-27 academic year.

Minister for School Education and Literacy Madhu Bangarappa informed the Legislative Assembly that the relaxation would also apply to admissions in Lower Kindergarten (LKG) and Upper Kindergarten (UKG).

He added that a regulatory framework for LKG and UKG admissions – currently absent – would be introduced through legislation in the next session.

The Minister said a circular would be issued to

Madhu Bangarappa

provide a 60-day relaxation in the age eligibility criteria for class 1 admissions for the 2026-27 academic year. Under the changed rules, a child who is 5 years and 10 months by June 1 would be eligible for admission to class 1.

Under existing rules, a child must be 6 years old by June 1 of the academic year to be eligible for class

IN THE LEGISLATURE

1, in line with the Right to Education Act and the National Education Policy 2020, both of which recommend 6 as the ideal entry age.

The government's decision to strictly enforce this rule from 2026-27 had triggered concern among parents, who feared their children might lose an academic year. Estimates suggest that close to 2.5 lakh students across the State could be affected if the rule were implemented without relaxation.

National norms

Karnataka had revised the minimum age criterion from five years and five months to six years in July 2022, to align with national norms. However, resistance from parents led to delays in enforcement until the current academic year.

As per the rule, children who do not turn six by June 1, 2026, would not be ineligible for class 1 admission, even if they have completed UKG. Parents have argued that many children born during the COVID-19 pandemic have already faced disruptions in their early education and this rule would affect them further.

Houses adjourned

The Budget session ended on Thursday with both the Houses of the State legislature being adjourned *sine die*.

Adjourning the Assembly *sine die*, Speaker U.T. Khader said the House had transacted for over 80 hours in 13 days.

Bypolls: 16 candidates withdraw; 34 in fray, including two Congress rebels

The Hindu Bureau
HUBBALLI/ BELAGAVI

A total of 16 candidates – 11 from Davangere South and 5 from Bagalkot Assembly constituency – withdrew their nominations before the deadline on Thursday. That has left 9 candidates in the fray in the byelection to the Bagalkot Assembly constituency and 25 candidates in the Davangere South. That includes two Congress rebel candidates, Sadiq Pahilwan and H. Subhan Sab.

The Congress delegation led by Saleem Ahmed and Rizwan Ahmed which reached Davangere bit late on Thursday, made futile attempt to convince Sadiq Pahilwan to withdraw. In a related development, KPCC has expelled Subhan Sab, Davangere district president of Labour wing, from the party for six years taking exception to his 'derogatory' remarks against the party and senior party leaders. The bypolls have been necessitated following the demise of former Ministers H.Y. Meti and Shamanur Shivashankarappa.

16 candidates had filed nomination papers for the byelection to Bagalkot Assembly constituency and during scrutiny the nominations of two candidates were rejected. In Davangere South, 39 candidates had filed nominations, of which the nominations of three were rejected.

In Bagalkot, those in fray include Umesh Hullappa Meti of the Congress and Veeranna Charantimath of the BJP, along with Karnataka Rashtra Samiti candidate Nagaraj Kalakutagar, Anthosh Savvase of Uttam Prajakeeya Party and four independents.

According to an official release, 11 independent candidates withdrew their nominations on Thursday.

In all, 22 Muslim candidates, the highest from the community so far, had filed their nomination papers in Davangere South, of which one nomination was rejected. Now, although eight Muslim candidates have withdrawn from contest, there are still 13 in the fray along with 12 others.

Former Minister Shamanur Shivashankarappa's grandson Samarth Mallikarjun is the Congress candidate here, while BJP has fielded Srinivas T. Dasakariyappa.

Polling is scheduled for April 9.

CM counters criticism over air travel expenses, questions spending by Centre

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday defended his use of air travel, countering the Opposition criticism by citing expenditure incurred by previous governments and questioning spending by the Centre.

To save time

Replying during a discussion on the Budget in the Legislative Council, Mr. Siddaramaiah said air travel was necessary to manage official engagements efficiently.

Siddaramaiah says that about ₹37 crore had been spent by former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on air travel in 2021-22

"As Chief Minister, I have to attend multiple programmes. To save time, I need to travel by air," he said.

He sought to draw a comparison with the tenure of former Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, stating that about ₹37 crore had been spent by him on air travel in 2021-22. "Why did you not question it then?" he asked the Opposition members.

Selective criticism

Providing details of his tenure, Mr. Siddaramaiah said expenditure on air travel stood at about ₹12 crore in 2023-24, ₹21 crore in 2024-25 and ₹29 crore in 2025-26. "Which is higher - ₹37 crore or ₹29 crore?" he asked, arguing that the criticism was selective.

He referred to expenditure on foreign visits by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, claiming that over ₹814 crore had been spent, and questioned whether that was not "wasteful".

Leader of the Opposition Chalavadi Narayanaswamy objected to the comparison, saying the Chief Minister should not cite the Centre's expenditure. He maintained that the Opposition was questioning the use of air travel for relatively short distances.

Responding, Mr. Siddaramaiah said decisions on travel were guided by administrative necessity. "Even for distances of 40 to 60 km, we may use air travel if required," he said, reiterating that similar practices were followed by previous governments without objection.

Centre has shown 'no real concern' for SCs and STs, says Siddaramaiah

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of failing to enact laws for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, alleging that the Centre had shown "no real concern" for marginalised communities, even as he flagged delays in key irrigation projects and pending dues as major contributors to the State's fiscal stress.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah speaking in the Legislative Council on Thursday.

Replying to the debate on the 2026-27 Budget in the Legislative Council, Mr. Siddaramaiah rejected BJP members' charge that funds earmarked under the Scheduled Caste Sub-Plan (SCSP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) were being diverted for guarantee schemes. Terming the allegation "far from the truth", he said allocations for social justice had, in fact, been significantly increased.

While the previous BJP government had allocated about ₹1.10 lakh crore under SCSP/TSP over four years, the present government has allocated ₹1.60 lakh crore over a comparable period (including the coming year), an increase of nearly ₹50,000 crore, to schemes for the marginalised. Of the ₹4.48 lakh crore Budget, 9.96% has been earmarked for these schemes, higher than the Centre's 6.5%, he said.

Recalling that Karnataka had enacted a law in 2013 mandating allocation of SCSP/TSP funds in proportion to population, he challenged the BJP to implement a similar framework in States where it was in power and at the national level. He pointed out that the State had scrapped the '7D' (deemed expenditure) provision to ensure more effective utilisation of these funds.

Trickle-down model

Contrasting approaches, the Chief Minister said the BJP followed a "trickle-down" economic model favouring the wealthy, while his government was focused on strengthening the lower strata through welfare measures akin to a universal basic income approach. Guarantee schemes were being implemented without discrimination across caste, religion and class, he asserted.

Emphasising the government's commitment to social justice, he said the Budget drew from the principles of B.R. Ambedkar, stressing that economic and social empowerment must accompany political freedom. He said delays in key irrigation projects were adding to the State's financial burden. The Centre was yet to issue the final notification for the Upper Krishna project, while ₹5,300 crore announced for the Upper Bhadra project in 2023-24 had not been released. Clearances for the Mahadayi and Mekedatu projects were pending, affecting irrigation expansion.

"These delays have a direct bearing on both development and finances," he said, urging MPs from Karnataka to press for approvals and release of funds.

He said ₹3,000 crore had been earmarked for land acquisition under the Upper Krishna project, with compensation fixed at ₹40 lakh per acre for irrigated land and ₹30 lakh for dry land under a consent award framework. Additional allocation would be made in the supplementary Budget if required.

On revenue projections, the Chief Minister said targets were realistic, with ₹1.25 lakh crore estimated for 2026-27, including ₹45,000 crore from excise, ₹29,000 crore from registration and ₹15,500 crore from motor vehicle taxes.

Budget was passed amid a walkout by BJP members, who alleged that it was "anti-Dalit and anti-people".

Audit finds gross financial irregularities in Dept. of Youth Empowerment and Sports

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has flagged gross financial irregularities in the functioning of the Department of Youth Empowerment and Sports (DYES) in Karnataka.

The report, tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday, noted that the proposed Karnataka Sports Act and related regulations have not been enacted even seven years after the State introduced a Comprehensive Sports Policy in 2018 aimed at building a transparent and inclusive sports ecosystem.

According to the report, during 2019-20 to 2023-24, the Sports Authority of Karnataka (SAK) and the General Thimmayya National Academy of Adventure (GETHNAA) received grant-in-aid of ₹83.57 crore and ₹15.85 crore, respectively. However, utilisation certificates and audited expenditure statements for these funds were not submitted.

The audit found that the department and GETHNAA disbursed cash awards and scholarships worth ₹11.47 crore, but supporting documents for payments amounting to ₹8.46 crore were not produced. In addition, irregular cash incentives totalling ₹4.54 crore were paid to 316 sportspersons in violation of scheme guidelines.

The CAG report, tabled in the Assembly, noted that non-implementation of key preventive health services during 2018–23 resulted in the forfeiture of ₹39.84 crore in grants from the ESIC. FILE PHOTO

Scrutiny of e-payment records further revealed that 62 payments shown as transferred to beneficiaries were instead credited to one of three bank accounts belonging to a person who was not a beneficiary.

The CAG pointed to the poor development of sports infrastructure. As many as 57 works worth ₹45.64 crore remained incomplete, while four projects had not even commenced as of March 2024.

The report observed overcrowding in sports hostels and an imbalance in the deployment of coaches, including the absence of athletics coaches in Bengaluru Urban district despite high enrolment, while available coaches in other districts remained underutilised.

It noted that non-implementation of key preventive health services during 2018-23 resulted in the forfeiture of ₹39.84 crore in grants from the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), depriving beneficiaries of essential preventive healthcare services.

Further, digital health initiatives such as telemedicine and the Dhanwantri portal remained underutilised. Full payments were released to contractors without obtaining completion certificates or verifying the delivery and operational readiness of medical equipment, resulting in idle expenditure of ₹7.74 crore, the report said.

'Govt. released grants to private varsities in violation of rules'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has flagged irregular release of government grants to two engineering colleges in Karnataka – B.V. Bhoomareddy College of Engineering and Technology (BVBCET), Hubballi, and Sri Jayachamarajendra College of Engineering (SJCE), Mysuru – despite their affiliation to private universities.

'Not entitled to aid'

According to the report tabled in the Legislative Assembly on Thursday, the State government released grant-in-aid amounting to ₹146.23 crore to these institutions, in violation of provisions of the respective university Acts.

During 2019-23 alone, BVBCET and SJCE received ₹50.30 crore and ₹95.93 crore, respectively.

The grants were issued in contravention of Section 5 of the KLE Technological University Act, 2012, and the J.S.S. Science and Technology University Act, 2013, which mandate that private universities must be self-financing and are not entitled to State government aid.

Despite this, the Commissioner of Collegiate and Technical Education continued to release funds periodically, the audit observed.

Both colleges ineligible

The audit found both colleges ineligible for such grants. In the case of BVBCET, the government initially stopped funding in March 2023, citing statutory provisions, but later issued an order in February 2024 allowing grants to continue until the 2022-23 batch completes its course and permitting retrenchment of aided staff by 2025-26.

For SJCE, Mysuru, directions were issued in November 2019 to continue grant support without specifying any timeline for phasing it out.

The CAG noted that the Higher Education Department failed to recover ₹5.72 crore paid as salaries to faculty deputed for pursuing PhDs between 2017 and 2020 in government engineering colleges and polytechnics. Of the 19 faculty members, 15 failed to complete their doctoral programmes, with delays of up to 33 months.

As per Rule 61(3) of the Karnataka Civil Services Rules, such salary payments during deputation should be recovered in case of non-completion. However, no recovery was made, the report stated.

KSOU V-C to consult Governor over next course of action

High Court allowed conference

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

Karnataka State Open University (KSOU) Vice-Chancellor Sharanappa V. Halase said he will consult Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot over the next course of action with regard to the government's decision to freeze the university's bank accounts.

The Congress government, which was against KSOU "hosting" the three-day conference on Hindutva ideologue Deendayal Upadhyaya titled 'Ekatma Manav Darshan - Bharat's Worldview' on its premises, had written to the banks to freeze the university's accounts.

The university will find it difficult to pay its employees' salaries and run day-to-day affairs when its bank accounts are frozen, said Prof. Halase. "I will discuss the matter with the Governor and decide on the next course of action," he said. Prof. Halase, who had clarified to the Department of Higher Education that the conference was a "private programme" and KSOU's role was limited to providing the venue on rent, attended the special plenary session of the conference on Thursday after welcoming the gathering during the inaugural session on Wednesday.

On Thursday, Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan addressed a plenary session on "Beyond the Western Paradigm: Shaping the Future of Higher Education through Bharat's Worldview" along with M.S. Chaitra, director of IKSHA and national research coordinator of Prajna Pravah.

Before addressing the session, Mr. Pradhan held an interaction with the academicians attending the conference at KSOU. He said the conference has brought together academic leaders to deliberate on the "future trajectory" of higher education in India with a focus on strengthening institutional frameworks and academic collaboration.

In a post on X, Mr. Pradhan said the deliberations focused on advancing higher education through effective implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. "NEP 2020 emphasises innovation, quality, and accessibility. The discussions highlighted the importance of integrating Indian Knowledge Systems into academia while strengthening India's expanding global education footprint including establishing Indian campuses abroad," he said.

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka had stayed the State government's March 24 directive to the KSOU to cancel the event citing "protocol violation".

Justice Sachin Shankar Magadum had passed the interim order on Wednesday on the petition filed by the event's organisers-trusts, Prajna Pravah Pratishthan, New Delhi, Parivartana, Karnataka, and Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation, New Delhi.

It was pointed out to the court that the government has ordered cancellation of the event on the KSOU premises, stating that the funds of the university are being utilised. The advocate told the court that the function has been organised by utilising the private funds and no funds of exchequer are utilised for the event.

The court directed the petitioner-trusts to file an undertaking by way of an affidavit that no funds pertaining to KSOU are utilised to conduct the function. The court directed the State authorities and the KSOU not to allow the trusts to hold the function and not to interfere with it. Further hearing adjourned till April 8.

Courage amid flames as bus passenger saves several lives

A mason breaks open the glasspanes and helps more than five passengers jump out of the bus as it catches fire; another passenger goes back to the burning vehicle to save his baby, and both die

N.S. Chowdary
Sambasiva Rao M.
MARKAPURAM/NELLORE

In a remarkable act of courage, a passenger, Balaraju Kola, rescued more than five co-passengers from a burning private travel bus after it collided with a tipper lorry near Markapuram in Andhra Pradesh on Thursday.

In an interaction with *The Hindu*, Mr. Balaraju, a mason, said: "I was browsing through my mobile phone when there was a blast-like sound. Within no time, thick smoke and flames engulfed the bus," he said.

"I broke open a window using my elbow. Luckily, I found a knife and smashed more glass panes. Before jumping out, I pushed six to seven passengers out of the bus. It was the best I could do amid the chaos...," he said.

Charred remains: The private bus and the tipper lorry after the accident near Markapuram on Thursday. KOMMURI SRINIVAS

He said the accident occurred when the bus driver, seeing an incoming tipper lorry from the opposite direction, swerved the vehicle to the right instead of moving to the left. The lorry driver too turned to the right. The bus rammed into the fuel tank of the lorry, trigerring a blast.

Mr. Balaraju narrated the story of his co-passenger Ambati Anil, who tried to save his five-month-old son. Anil first pushed his wife out of the bus. He then went back into the bus which was already in flames, searching for the baby but got trapped. Anil and the baby died," he said.

In another instance, Thalapala Surendra, a construction worker from Telangana, along with his family members, was returning to his native place of Nallagondla.

After the bus collided with the tipper, Mr. Surendra broke the window glass. He, along with his wife, her brother, and two children, escaped through the window.

Special Cabinet meet on internal quota deferred due to MCC

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The special meeting had been called to decide on internal reservation for SCs as the Karnataka govt. initiated recruitment process to fill 56,432 posts

The much-anticipated Special Cabinet meeting to iron out differences over internal reservation among 101 Scheduled Castes, which was to be held on Friday, has been postponed to beyond April 9. The decision came after Advocate-General Shashi Kiran Shetty advised that any decision to be taken would be in violation of the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) in place due to by-polls to the Bagalkot and Davangere South Assembly seats to be held on April 9.

Informal discussions

Soon after the regular Cabinet on Thursday, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah held an informal meeting with Ministers from Dalit Right and Dalit Left communities, where Minister K.H. Muniyappa, who belongs to Dalit Left, is learnt to have brought pressure to hold the meeting.

Eventually, it was decided to postpone the Special Cabinet meeting to beyond April 9 when the voting for the bypolls would get over.

"The Cabinet decided that in view of the MCC, the Special Cabinet [meeting] will have to be deferred. Though there was scope for discussion, what is the use when a decision cannot be made?" Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H.K. Patil told pressmen on Thursday.

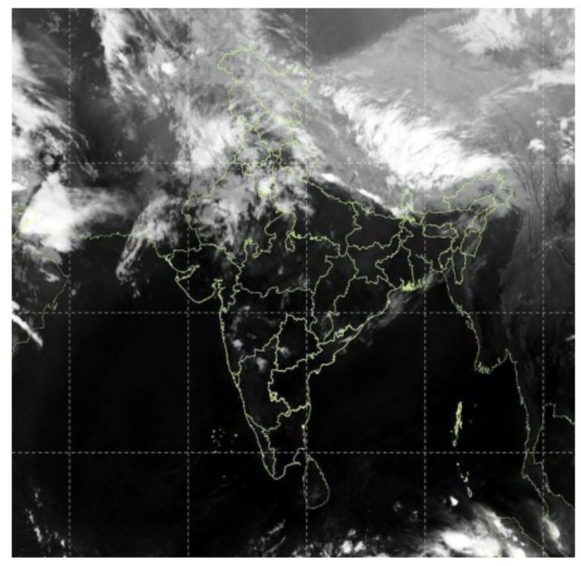
The Special Cabinet meeting had been called to decide on internal reservation within the 15% quota for SCs as the State government has initiated recruitment process to fill 56,432 posts. While the Dalit Left communities are seeking internal reservation within the 15%, the Dalit Right and "touchable" SC communities are opposed to it.

Cabinet Ministers struck different notes on the internal reservation in recruitment. While Mr. Patil said that the recruitment process would continue as per the notification (for 15% reservation and without internal reservation), Mr. Muniyappa said that recruitment would not take place without internal reservation. According to Mr. Muniyappa, owing to MCC, recruitment notifications could not be issued.

Stating that the government was committed to implementing internal reservation, Mr. Muniyappa appealed to community leaders not to start any agitation till the Cabinet met again to decide the issue. "There is no point in taking a decision on internal reservation that can be stuck down by the Election Commission. I have also spoken to the Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister D. K. Shivakumar on the issue. We will get proportionate reservation in sub-classification," he said.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Friday: Heavy Rainfall very likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, West Bengal and Sikkim.Thunderstorm accompanied with hailstorm very likely at isolated places over Assam, Meghalaya, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal and Sikkim.

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	5.0	32.6	19.8	Kozhikode	—	36.0	27.8
Ahmedabad	—	38.0	24.1	Kurnool	—	40.5	25.2
Aizawl	—	32.0	18.6	Lucknow	—	—	—
Allahabad	—	38.2	17.5	Madurai	—	37.4	24.2
Bengaluru	—	34.4	21.0	Mangaluru	—	34.6	25.4
Bhopal	—	37.4	17.8	Mumbai	—	35.1	24.5
Bhubaneswar	—	37.0	23.8	Mysuru	—	35.0	23.0
Chandigarh	—	32.4	18.7	New Delhi	—	34.6	18.2
Chennai	—	32.6	24.1	Patna	—	35.2	21.0
Coimbatore	—	36.2	23.0	Port Blair	—	31.9	24.6
Dehradun	—	31.5	15.2	Puducherry	—	32.6	23.1
Gangtok	28.0	14.5	11.3	Pune	—	39.2	24.1
Goa	—	—	—	Raipur	—	38.3	25.0
Guwahati	8.0	30.5	20.0	Ranchi	—	32.8	19.0
Hubballi	—	36.6	22.2	Shillong	—	21.5	11.3
Hyderabad	—	37.2	23.1	Shimla	—	22.6	10.8
Imphal	—	28.7	14.6	Srinagar	—	21.0	12.3
Jaipur	—	—	22.2	Thiruvananthapuram	—	33.0	24.8
Kochi	—	33.6	27.0	Tiruchi	—	36.3	24.4
Kohima	8.0	19.0	12.3	Vijayawada	—	—	—
Kolkata	—	33.5	25.4	Visakhapatnam	—	32.9	27.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO₂	NO₂	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.40	108	97	82	151	
Bengaluru	.10	.26	18	88	127	
Chennai	.5	.6	38	40	62	
Delhi	.17	.47	34	357	357	
Hyderabad	.17	.14	10	65	97	
Kolkata	.8	.25	22	38	40	
Lucknow	.—	.36	39	102	158	
Mumbai	.2	.29	12	50	72	
Pune	.—	.39	28	140	147	
Visakhapatnam	.—	.36	11	45	104	

Yesterday

In observation made at 4.00 p.m., Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh recorded an overall air quality index (AQI) score of 260 indicating an unhealthy level of pollution. In contrast, Nagaon, Assam recorded a healthy AQI score of 36.

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO₂: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

MUDA case: Karnataka HC notice to CM, wife

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The High Court of Karnataka on Thursday ordered the issue of notice to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, his wife Parvathi B.M. and others on a petition challenging a special court's order of accepting a clean chit given to them by the Lokayukta police on the allegation of illegalities and corruption in the allotment of 14 alternative sites worth ₹56 crore to Ms. Parvathi by the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA).

Justice S. Sunil Dutt Yadav passed the order on the petition filed by social activist Snehamayi Krishna, who had lodged a complaint of illegalities and corruption in the allotment of a large number of sites, including the allotment of 14 sites, to Ms. Parvathi by MUDA.

The special court on January 28 had accepted the 'B' report, in which the Lokayukta police had said the allegations of corruption and criminal conspiracy against Mr. Siddaramaiah, Ms. Parvathi, her brother Mallikarjuna Swamy and Devaraju J., from whom Mr. Swamy had purchased around three acres of land on being denotified by MUDA, could not be established in the investigation.

Mr. Krishna's petition said that the special court committed a jurisdictional error by selectively accepting the 'B' report only with respect to four individuals, while simultaneously ordering further investigation into MUDA officials involved in the same transaction.

It has been argued in the petition that the special court's order is fundamentally inconsistent as it accepts the investigation's finding that the 50:50 compensatory site allotment scheme caused significant loss to MUDA and the State, including in the allotment of 14 sites to Ms. Parvathi, yet concludes that no offence is made out against the primary beneficiaries.

The petition further asserts that the special court failed to consider crucial materials submitted by the Directorate of Enforcement (ED), which is yet to submit a conclusive report.

One more terror suspect arrested

The Hindu Bureau
VIJAYAWADA

The NTR Commissionerate police arrested Shadman Dilkash, 21, in Patna, for allegedly being involved in unlawful activities by posting terror-related content in various social media groups.

A Vijayawada court gave judicial remand to the accused till April 6. Police have arrested six of the accused so far in the case.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the General Public that our clients **Mr.Vijaya Kumar S,** S/o Subramani, aged about 36 years, Aadhaar No.5924 6390 7266, residing at No.53, Annayappa Layout, Macca Masjid Road, Devasandra, K.R.Puram, Bangalore-560036, represents that the Original Sale deed dated 05.02.2015, Document No.KRI-1-08205/2014-15, in the office of the Sub Registrar K.R.Puram, executed by **Mr.Kaleem Pasha and Mr.Abdul Salaam** to in favour of **Mrs.K.Vanajakshamma** in respect to the SCHEDULE PROPERTY mentioned hereunder is lost / misplace and not traceable.

If anybody other than the said **Mr.Vijaya Kumar S** has any claim, right, title and interest on the SCHEDULE PROPERTY by virtue of being in possession or otherwise of the above said Original Documents, or any Rights they should file their claim with documentary proof within **SEVEN DAYS** from the date of issuance of this Public Notice in our office, at the address mentioned below, failing which, it will be taken for granted that nobody has any manner of right, title, interest or claim over the **SCHEDULE PROPERTY** other than the said **Mr.Vijaya Kumar S.**

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

Property bearing Portion of **Site No.12**, Khatha No.51/3/12, Property No.51/3, situated at **Masjid Road Annayyappa Layout, Devasandra, K.R.Puram Hobli, Bangalore East Taluk**, Presently within the limits of BBMP, measuring East to West **19.6 feet** and North to South **30 feet,** total measuring **585 Sq.feet** and bounded on: **East by : 20 feet Road; West by: Railways Property; North by : Property of Perumal; South by : Site No.13;**

Shruthi.S, Advocate
Unit No.101, 1st Floor, No.663, at 3rd Cross, Opp: to Karnataka Bank, K.R.Puram, Bangalore-560036

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt.: Saran), Bihar-841221

E-Open Tender Notice No.: S/RWP/E/2025-26/25, Dated: 25.03.2026. Principal Chief Materials Manager/Rail Wheel Plant, Bela for and on behalf of the **President of India** invites **online "e-Open Tender",** through Indian Railways E-Procurement Website **www.ireps.gov.in** for supply of following Stores item at RWP/Bela. The closing time of all tenders is 14.00 hrs. **SN. 1. Tender No. : 01261243, Short Description of item :** Lifting Tackle Stand for Wheels, **Quantity :** 14000 Nos., **Due Date/Time of Closing :** 17.04.2026 at 14.00 Hrs. **SN. 2. Tender No. : 01261039A, Short Description of item :** Graphite Electrode with Nipple, **Quantity :** 500 MT, **Due Date/Time of Closing :** 17.04.2026 at 14.00 Hrs. **1.** Website address, on which full tender details can be seen and downloaded from, is **www.ireps.gov.in. 2.** The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with the above website for updates including **Addendum/Corrigendum/Cancellation** with respect to the above tender.

PCMM, Rail Wheel Plant, Bela
RWP/CPRO/Advt./2025-26/130

GREATER BENGALURU DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Kandaya Bhawan, 3rd Floor, Ramanagara, Bangalore South District - 562 159.
Phone: 7259198192, e-mail: gbbscpa@gmail.com.

No.GBDA/Out Source Vehicle/03/2025-26 Dated: 24.03.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (through KPPP Portal only)

e-tender for **providing outsource Vehicle services** to the office of Greater Bengaluru Development Authority, Ramanagara has been published in e-Procurement Portal of GOK. For details visit **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** (Auction Notice No. GBDA/2025-26/SE0008)

Sd/- **Deputy Commissioner (LA)**
GBDA, Ramanagara.

DIPR/BSD/719/SA/2025-26

FORM A
PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT
(Regulation 14 of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (Voluntary Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2017)

FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE STAKEHOLDERS OF OMIX RESEARCH AND DIAGNOSTICS LABORATORIES PRIVATE LIMITED

1.	**Name of Corporate Person**	**Omix Research And Diagnostics Laboratories Private Limited**
2.	Date of incorporation of Corporate Person	30/06/2014
3.	Authority under which Corporate Person is incorporated /registered	Registrar of Companies - Bangalore
4.	Corporate identity number / limited liability identity number of Corporate Person	U74900KA2014PTC075127
5.	Address of the registered Office and Principal office (if any) of Corporate Person	A 1402, Brigade Exotica, Old Madras Road, Avalahalli, P.O. Virgonagar,Bangalore, Virgonagar, Bangalore, Bangalore South - 560 049, Karnataka
6.	Liquidation commencement date of Corporate Person	**24th March 2026**
7.	Name, address, email address, telephone number and the registration number of the Liquidator	**Name: CS THIRUPAL GORIGE** **Address:** No. 87, 2nd Floor, 21st Cross, 7th main, N S. Palya, BTM 2nd Stage, Bangalore-560 076, Karnataka **Email:** gthirupal@gmail.com **Mobile No.:** +91 94483 84064, **Ph:** +080 7963 4233 **Regn. No:** IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00016/2016-17/10030 **AFA Valid upto**: 31/12/2026
8.	Last date for submission of claims	**23rd April 2026**

Notice is hereby given that **Omix Research And Diagnostics Laboratories Private Limited** has commenced voluntary liquidation on **24th March 2026.**

The stakeholders of **Omix Research And Diagnostics Laboratories Private Limited** are hereby called upon to submit a proof of their claims, on or before **23rd April 2026** to the liquidator at the address mentioned against item 7.

The financial creditors shall submit their proof of claims by electronic means only. All other stakeholders may submit the proof of claims in person, by post or by electronic means.

Submission of false or misleading proofs of claim shall attract penalties.

Sd/-
Thirupal Gorige
Date: March 24, 2026 Liquidator, Omix Research And Diagnostics Laboratories Private Limited
Place: Bangalore **Registration No:** IBBI/IPA-002/IP-N00016/2016-17/10030

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Publication of Tender Notice No. 27-SNT-MYS-2025-01 & 27-SNT-MYS-2025-02 Dated: 20-03-2026

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

SL	Name of the work	Approx. Value
01	Hiring of 17 skilled signal technicians for a period of 2 years to perform extra maintenance tasks (with supervision) on operational railway lines, with a key focus on updating data for surplus signaling assets in the SMMS portal.	Rs. 1,29,84,622.56
02	Hiring of 24 highly skilled telecom technicians for the installation, maintenance & monitoring of S&T assets along with provision of new connectivity/technology in DRM building, section, offices, Railway colony and RH/VRC for a period of 2 years in Mysuru Division.	Rs. 2,02,06,886.40

Last date for submission of bids : **Upto 11:30 Hrs. on 11-04-2026**

For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in

Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer
PUB/1015/AAF/PRB/SWR/2025-26 **Mysuru**

Download the **RailOne** app. RailOne is the all-in-one railway app by Indian Railways. Passengers can book reserved tickets, unreserved tickets, platform tickets, and season passes, check PNR status, order food, and access many more services at their fingertips. Use digital payment to book unreserved tickets through **RailOne** app, and enjoy up to a **3%** discount.

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRAILWAYHQ | sw_railways

Directorate of Tourism, Department of Tourism, Art Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs, Govt. of Jharkhand
MDI Building, 2nd Floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004
GSTIN-20RCHD00786C1D4
Phone:(0651)2400493, email:dirjharkhandtourism@gmail.com, Web:https://tourism.jharkhand.gov.in

e-Tender Notice

e-TenderNo.: Tour/Dir/Pra/09/2026 - **267**/Ranchi **Date:-26/03/2026**

Jharkhand Tourism invites reputed bidders with proven experience in Adventure Sports and Leisure Activities, along with a sound financial background, to participate in the e-Tender through this Request for Proposal (RFP) for Selection of an Agency for Development, Operation and Management of Adventure Sports and Leisure Activities under Adventure Festivals at various locations in the State of Jharkhand.

NIT No.	Name of the works	Earnest money to be deposited (in Rs.)	Time of completion of work
	Request for Proposal (RFP) for Selection of an Agency for Development, Operation and Management of Adventure Sports and Leisure Activities under Adventure Festivals at various locations in the State of Jharkhand.	₹30,00,000.00 (Thirty Lakh Only)	120 Days
RFP/Tender Availability		27/03/2026; Time: 11:00 Hrs	
Last date for receiving Pre-bid queries		06/04/2026; Time: 16:00 Hrs	
Pre-bid Meeting		08/04/2026; Time: 15:00 Hrs	
Response to queries		10/04/2026; Time: 15:00 Hrs	
Last date of Submission		17/04/2026; Time: 14:00 Hrs	
Technical Bid opening		17/04/2026; Time 16:00 Hrs	
Financial Bid Opening		To be announced	
Cost of Tender (Demand Draft)		Electronic transfer of INR 11,800/- (Inclusive of GST) (Non-Refundable) through Jharkhand Tender website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in/nicgep/app	
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)		Electronic transfer of INR 30,00,000/- through Jharkhand Tender website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in	
Website for downloading Tender Documents		https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in	
Name and Address of Office inviting Tender		Directorate of Tourism, Department of Tourism, Art Culture, Sports and Youth Affairs, Govt. of Jharkhand MDI Building, 2nd Floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004	
Venue for Bid Opening		Director, Directorate of Tourism, MDI Building, 2nd Floor, Dhurwa, Ranchi-834004	

1. E-Tender document and BOQ including terms & conditions, Tender specification, etc. can be downloaded from website https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in. Any details required in the regard can also be procured from the office of the undersigned (0651-2400493) during office hours. NIC helpline no. is 0651-2400178.
2. The bids will be received only through electronic tendering mode.
3. No claim shall be entertained on account of disruption of internet services while uploading thebid. Bidders are advised to upload their bids well in advance to avoid last minute technical snag.
4. Bidders must submit a copy of the UTR/reference number as proof of online payment of the tender fee and EMD, as mentioned in the NIT, before the specified cutoff date and time. The details of the finally uploaded BOQ, EMD, and payment instruments (DD/Cheque, etc.) must exactly match the details submitted online (scanned copies); any discrepancies will result in the bid being rejected.

Sd/-
PR 376134 Tourism, Art Culture Sports And Youth Affairs(25-26)#D **Director, Tourism**

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
Ministry of Finance, Department of Fiancial Services
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, KARNATAKA
4th Floor, Telephone House , Rajbhavan Road Bengaluru - 560001

Form No. 14 (See Regulation 33(2))

TRC No. 835/2019

UCO Bank, Jayanagar Branch, 9th Main Road, 3rd Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru - 560 011 **... Certificate Holder Bank**

Versus

Anjanegowda & others **....Certificate Debtor/Defendants**

DEMAND NOTICE

1. Sri Anjanegowda (Borrower) S/o. Kalaiah, No. 546, Anjananagar East, Herohalli, Bengaluru- 560 091

Office / unit Address: M/s. Jai Hanuman Engg. Works, No. 597, 10th Main Road, 4th Block, West Chord Road, Basaveshwaranagar, Bengaluru - 560 079.

2. Smt. Meenakshi Kalasaiah, W/o. Sri Kalasaiah (Co- obligant), No. 546, Anjananagar East, Herohalli, Bengaluru- 560 091.

Office / unit Address: M/s. Jai Hanuman Engg. Works, No. 597, 10th Main Road, 4th Block, West Chord Road, Basaveshwaranagar, Bengaluru - 560 079.

3. Mrs. Nandadeepa (Guarantor), W/o. Sri Anjanegowda, No. 546, Anjananagar East, Herohalli, Bengaluru- 560 091

Office / unit Address: M/s. Jai Hanuman Engg. Works, No. 597, 10th Main Road, 4th Block, West Chord Road, Basaveshwaranagar, Bengaluru - 560 079. **....Certificate Debtor/Defendants**

In view of the Recovery Certificate issued in **O.A. No.631/2018** passed by the Hon'ble Presiding Officer, DRT, Bengaluru on 29.06.2019 and an amount of **Rs.63,77,027/-** (Rupees Sixty Three Lakhs Seventy Seven Thousand Twenty Seven Only) is due against you along with interest and costs from date of filing of O.A.s till realization of the Recovery Certificate.

In addition to the sum aforesaid you will be liable to pay all charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and other process that may be taken for recovering the amount due.

You are hereby called upon to deposit the amount within 15 days of the receipt of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made as per rules.

Given under my hand and seal of the Tribunal on **19.10.2019.**

Sd/- Recovery Officer-1
Debts Recovery Tribunal-2 , Bangalore

Note: Attention is invited to Rule 16 of the Second Schedule of the Income Tax Act 1961 read with Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 which is reproduced below: "Rule 16 (1) Where a notice has been served on a defaulter under Rule 2, the defaulter or his representative in interest shall not be competent to mortgage, charge, lease or otherwise deal with any property belonging to him except with the permission of the Debt Recovery Officer, nor shall any Civil Court issue any process against such property in execution of a decree for the payment of money. (2) Where an attachment has been made under this Schedule any private transfer or delivery of the property attached or of any interest therein and any payment to the defaulter of any debt, dividend or other monies contrary to such attachment, shall be void, as against all claims enforceable under the attachment".3) You are also liable to disclose your assets both movable and immovable to this Tribunal along with the Income Tax Returns of last 5 years.

BENGALURU-MYSURU INFRASTRUCTURE CORRIDOR AREA PLANNING AUTHORITY
No. 5, Second Floor, Looplane, Race Course Road, Bengaluru - 560009.
Phone: 080-22341230/35 E-mail: bmicapa@gmail.com

No: BMICAPA/CLU-02/26/2021-22/2907 Date: 26-03-2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

(UNDER SEC 14(A) OF KTCP ACT, 1961)

Sri H.Y. Ashwath S/o Late Yallegowda has applied to this Authority seeking Change of land use from **"Agriculture"** Zone to **"Residential"** purpose pertaining to Sy.No: **62/1** extent of 01 Acre - 02 Guntas of **Lalagatta Village,** Kasaba Hobli, Channapatna Taluk, Bengaluru South District under Sec 14(A) of KTCP Act 1961. The foresaid land is reserved for **Agriculture Zone** in Approved Master Plan. Applicant has stated that the change of land use sought is in the interest of public by quoting the following:

1) By developing the Layout in the above said land, the Poor and Middle Class people will get the Sites for reasonable Price.
2) During the development works of the Layout there will be opportunity of employment for labourers.
3) Surrounding areas will be developed by developing the Layout in the above said land.
4) By development of planned layout, the public are benefited with the civic amenities such as good Roads, UGD, Electrical facilities and Parks etc.,

Objections, if any, are invited from the public, any person may file his / her objection to **Member Secretary, BMICAPA, Bengaluru** in writing to the above address mentioned in this publication within 15 days from this notice. Any objections received after stipulated time will not be considered.

Sd/- Member Secretary,
B.M.I.C.A.P.A., Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/6475/Adverto/2025-26

Rail Wheel Plant/Bela
(Distt. - Saran), Bihar - 841221

E-Tender Notice No.: 12/RWP/Engg/2025-26/WT/(Open) Dated 23.03.2026. The Dy.CE/RWP/Bela for and on behalf of the President of India invites online **"e-Open Tender"**, through Indian Railways E-Procurement Portal (IREPS) **www.ireps.gov.in**, for the following works as detailed. 1. Name of the work and Location, Approximate cost, Earnest money and Completion period of the work. **Tender No.**: 19_RWP_Engg_25_26_WT_Open. **Name of Work:** Provision of CHI office, CHI store, Ambulance driver room, Laundry room, kitchen and parking lot for trucks near material gate at RWP/Bela. **Approximate Cost: Rs. 83,25,053/-. Tender form Cost:** NIL. **Earnest Money: Rs. 1,66,500/-. Completion period of the Work:** 08 Months. **Tender No.:** 21_RWP_Engg_25_26_WT_Open. **Name of Work:** Annual Maintenance of Rail track from NYO station to RWP/Bela including track inside premises of RWP/Bela. **Approximate Cost: Rs. 51,97,090/-. Tender form Cost:** NIL. **Earnest Money: Rs. 1,04,000/-. Completion period of the Work**: 11 Months. 2. Tender closing date and time: **13.04.2026 upto 14:30 Hrs**. 3. Website particulars and notice board location where complete details of tender can be obtained and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.: The above tender can be submitted only by the date and time as mentioned in the notice. For full details and submission of bid kindly visit Portal (IREPS) **www.ireps.gov.in**. The prospective firms/bidders submitting bid are advised to remain in touch with IREPS Portal **(www.ireps.gov.in)** for updates including Addendum/ Corrigendum / Cancellation with respect to the above tender because no such any notice / information concerned that shall be published in newspaper.

Dy. CE/RWP/Bela
RWP/CPRO/ADVT/2025-26/128

Faiths and fences

Limiting reservation benefits to specific religious groups is appropriate

The Supreme Court of India has reiterated a long-held, yet contested, principle of India's anti-discrimination jurisprudence – that protections and special provisions for Scheduled Caste (SC) communities will be available only to those who practise Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. The March 24 Court judgment arose from a Christian pastor who sought protections under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, in Andhra Pradesh. The Court upheld a High Court decision that any member of the SC community who has converted out of the three religions specified in the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950, issued under Article 341, ceases to be an SC member. The original definition of SC included only Hindus, but was extended to Sikhs (1956) and Buddhists (1990). India's founding leaders, including first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, were clear that the extreme form of discrimination manifested in untouchability was unique to Hindu society. But political and social realities forced amendments later. SC communities began using religious conversion itself as an act of assertion and autonomy. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar himself led a mass conversion of SC members to Buddhism. Notably, he converted to Buddhism in 1956, the year when all SC communities practising the Sikh religion were brought under special provisions, including reservation.

There are theological and legal arguments for this distinction reiterated by the Court. It is often argued that in Christianity and Islam, there is no theological defence of discrimination based on social stratification. That Sikhism and Buddhism are part of the civilisational universe of Hinduism is an argument which has gained political and constitutional legitimacy. Under Explanation II to Article 25(2) of the Constitution, the definition of Hindu includes the Sikh, Buddhist and Jain faiths. Neither the theological nor the constitutional arguments for the exclusion of converts to Islam and Christianity from special protections are logically or empirically watertight, and hence the question continues to fester. Christian or Muslim converts continue to face discrimination, including untouchability, even within their new religious world. After all, discrimination needs no theological sanction. But the question of their inclusion remains a politically surcharged topic, with a commission headed by former Chief Justice of India K.G. Balakrishnan examining this. Many Dalit activists oppose the inclusion of converts within the existing quantum of reservation. Many members of SC communities who have converted to Christianity or Islam receive benefits under provisions meant for Socially and Educationally Backward Classes under Article 15(4) of the Constitution. The Court's decision is appropriate under the existing legal and constitutional scheme, and any change can only come through a political process and the legislative route.

Tepid promises

India must enhance battery storage to fully use non-fossil capacity

India came in late, but it was worth the wait. A section of the Paris Agreement, under which all countries except the United States have agreed to keep temperatures from rising beyond 2°C of pre-Industrial times, requires updating their targets every five years from 2020. As of December last year, India and Argentina were the only two G-20 countries that had not announced updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) for 2035. This was despite India's Environment Minister committing at COP30 in Brazil, in November 2025, to update by the 'year-end'. The saving grace is that this happened in time before Financial Year 2025-26 ends in a week. The latest set of NDCs by India commits to, by 2035, an installed electric capacity that is 60% from non-fossil sources; reducing, by 47%, the intensity of emissions per unit of GDP and having a 3.5 billion tonne-4 billion tonne CO_2 carbon sink. This is an update over India's 2020 NDCs: of an installed electric capacity that is 50% from non-fossil sources; reducing, by 45%, the intensity of emissions per unit of GDP and having a 2.5 billion tonne-3 billion tonne CO_2 carbon sink. Thus, the necessary boxes have been ticked.

The EU has committed to a 40%-49% cut below 2005 levels. As a developing nation, India – a significant contributor of net emissions in recent years but below the world average in per capita emissions – will not cut annual emissions but promises to emit less carbon per unit of energy and source more of its power from non-fossil sources. It has also committed to being net zero by 2070 through increasing its tree and forest cover (which absorb CO_2) and the recently announced technology pathways such as carbon capture, utilisation, and storage. India's 2035 goals are easily achievable and the government has expressed that plainly. India already met its 2030 non-fossil target last year, with 52% capacity installed. The rub is that only about 25% of the power generated is non-fossil due to insufficient battery storage which is unable to harness all the available solar and wind power. The Power Ministry's National Generation Adequacy Plan itself expects 70% of the projected installed 1,121 GW capacity by 2035-36 to be non-fossil. It is tempting to laud India for embellishing its green commitments amidst a war in West Asia that has squeezed supply of a vital fossil fuel. However, without actual improvements in generated supply, these numbers mean little. With the war demonstrating the chokehold that a fossil fuel has, India must exhibit more urgency toward enhancing battery storage and improving its electric grid to better utilise existing non-fossil capacity.

The key to India's multi-domain deterrence, capabilities

Harinder Singh

A retired Lieutenant General and a former corps commander

China's military poses a serious challenge to India. New Delhi has no choice but to pursue a robust industrial strategy to offset China's military advantage. Otherwise, it risks the widening of the capability gap. But bridging this gap requires political expediency to make urgent, hard policy choices – what to buy, what to build, and the potential costs and benefits. The challenge is that technology is evolving faster than doctrine, making precise choices even more difficult. The question is how India should reconceptualise its doctrinal and technological choices and adopt a credible defence-industrial strategy to deter the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

Hard choices, systemic vulnerabilities

There could be three contrasting ways to approach the issue. First, India could adopt a bold approach. It would imply betting on the right technological trends and investing in a completely new bundle of war-fighting technologies. The risk is if implementation fails, it can create acute capability vulnerabilities and further weaken the margin of deterrence with India's adversaries. Besides, India lacks the industrial heft to produce technologies at scale and speed to neutralise China's advantage. But, if successful, it could help reduce the capability gap.

Second, India could consider a more conservative strategy. This would entail integrating a wide range of emerging technologies with those in-service to make the existing force more effective. It would also entail enhancing India's cyber, space and electronic warfare capabilities to digitise the battlespace, to streamline and condense the kill chains. This is entirely doable, but it would not alter the balance of power. Perhaps, this strategy is more suited to fight a short war with Pakistan, not a protracted conflict.

Third, India could explore the middle path. While it continues to rely on legacy platforms, it invests in the creation and deployment of enabling layers, to enhance its ability to deter China. While, multi-domain operations (MDO) should be the obvious choice; India is not there yet for a mix of reasons. Besides, MDO as a concept is difficult to define, and even more difficult to operationalise. This would entail fielding a set of crucial enabling layers – of Command and Control (C2), Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR), deep-strike, close-battle, infrastructure and logistics, which are critical to war outcomes. As these layers evolve, India's military would shape into a syncretic, multi-domain force. Historically, military transformations have adopted well-known paths. It entails aligning research, development and industrial capacity, doctrines and structures and technology and tactics across institutions, and over time, to deter threats. National security institutions, including the military, have to work together to develop a common picture of the deterrence that the state wishes to create. Since India's margin of deterrence against China is uncertain, India's endeavour should be to analyse the factors that explain the systemic challenges to building a robust posture. Two aspects stand out. First, India's industrial challenges are well known. Its ability to translate its military requirements into industrial targets is doubtful. The issue is not its technological competence but its defence-industrial base, which is not structured to deliver at speed and scale. Missiles, munitions and drones are urgent industrial investments of the day; so are the ISR and C2 networks and shortfalls in legacy platforms. India needs to expand its defence-industrial base in conjunction with private industry; otherwise, it may continue to face constraints.

A robust defence-industrial base will shape India's multi-domain deterrence and resilience, especially against China

While there is no one-off solution to coordinating industrial capacity, technology and doctrine, incremental steps can generate benefits in the long term. Removing red tape, ensuring budgetary stability, and providing long-term contracts especially for specialised platforms could prove helpful. A mindset change recognising that private players can build military systems more efficiently than the government sector, is needed. It is never too late to shore up the system, but the window for industrial reform is clearly shrinking.

Second, India's procurement system has to focus on evolving and not constraining the fighting force. The system has to adapt faster and be rooted in an efficient defence-industrial base that can produce what an evolving force needs. India needs to spend more, but spend smarter by making hard choices in prioritising key deterrent capabilities. This will require the broadest possible debate and consensus on what needs to be done, and why. It is also the military's job to explain its roles and tasks to the political leadership, the costs of inaction and possible trade-offs, and how they impact the deterrence that India wishes to achieve.

Fixing the enabling layers

Strengthening India's deterrence would mean altering China's military confidence, while preventing it from assuming that any single capability could prove decisive. This is more so when India has no single capability which is exquisite enough to alter the military balance. By creating and operationalising the enabling layers – C2, ISR, deep-strike, close-battle and others – India can aspire to field a capable multi-domain force, to deter the Chinese.

India must have two top priorities. First, to identify those military vulnerabilities that present an advantage to China. Its fledgling C4ISR (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) is one such concern. Dominating the C4ISR battle is key: the side that can see can continue to fight. India needs cheap ISR platforms, in numbers which it can afford to lose, yet maintain ISR capacity. It even needs superior cyber, space and electronic warfare capabilities to deceive and degrade the adversary's ISR platforms. A layered C4ISR – one that enhances one's ISR capacity, while limiting an adversary's ability – is vital.

There are other layers, as well. For instance, the integration of missiles, aircraft and drones as the strike layer to dislocate the enemy in depth. The coordinated employment of land-based platforms such as tanks, guns, and infantry vehicles as a layer to fight front-line battles is crucial. A robust logistic layer that integrates all rear-zone elements including logistic installations, supply chains, and infrastructure is essential for fighting a protracted war. Equally important, in India's case, will be its nuclear deterrent, and how much nuclear capability it needs to compensate for a lack of conventional deterrence to dissuade a nuclear adversary such as China.

Second, India needs to incentivise the right parts of the defence industrial base, by making one-off budgetary allocations in select capabilities. China has a sizeable missile inventory and has the industrial capacity to produce thousands more, during conflict. If a conflict erupts, it can use these against India, with devastating effect. Even if India were to withstand the initial PLA strikes, it would put severe pressure on India's surge capacity. This inventory gap is a risky bet. India has to incentivise defence production, in the absence of which, China might be tempted to drag India into a protracted fight.

India should, therefore, be spending less time admiring the service-specific acquisitions, and fix the critical enabling layers in the deterrence system. Besides, theatre-isation alone might not help create these layers, unless it is rooted in deep doctrinal convergence.

A mislabelling of a Supreme Court handbook

Tiasha Mukherjee

Lawyer and a Master of Law candidate at the University of Cambridge

In February this year, during a hearing on a sexual assault case, the Chief Justice of India (CJI), Justice Surya Kant, remarked that the Supreme Court Handbook – *Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes* – released in 2023 by then CJI D.Y. Chandrachud to combat gender stereotypes, was 'technical' and 'too Harvard-oriented. The CJI requested the National Judicial Academy to constitute a panel of domain experts, academicians and lawyers to review the handbook and submit a report. It was noted during the hearing that the forensic terms used in the handbook to describe different aspects of sexual assault cases may not be readily understood by survivors, their families, or laypersons. The Court also emphasised the need for greater practical training of judges.

Not 'Harvard-oriented' at all

While the emphasis on judicial training is welcome, a close reading of the handbook suggests that it is far from 'Harvard-oriented'. On the contrary, it is firmly grounded in Indian precedent and courtroom realities. By its own terms, the handbook sets out three modest but important objectives – first, to identify language in judicial reasoning that perpetuates gender stereotypes and to suggest alternatives; second, to highlight common reasoning patterns based on such stereotypes and explain why they are incorrect; and third, to compile binding decisions of the Supreme Court of India that have already rejected these stereotypes.

After explaining the impact of stereotypes on judicial reasoning, the handbook provides, in a tabulated format, stereotype promoting language alongside recommended alternatives, which are further supported by case law. The goal is to ensure that judicial language aligns with constitutional commitments to dignity and equality.

Calling the 'Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes' Harvard-oriented overlooks its practical, context-driven guidance

Judgments and language

Consider, for instance, the Court's decision in 2010 in *D. Velusamy vs D. Patchaiammal*. In discussing whether a live-in relationship would qualify as a "relationship in the nature of marriage" under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, the Court used the term "keep" to describe a woman "he maintains financially and uses mainly for sexual purpose and/or as a servant". The language later drew sharp criticism in court, from then Additional Solicitor General Indira Jaising for its patriarchal connotations. The handbook flags precisely such expressions to ensure that future judgments avoid sexist language.

Similarly, Indian judgments have at times used the word "ravished" to describe rape. The term carries archaic, moralistic undertones, focusing more on romantic connotations than on consent and bodily autonomy. The use of problematic language in judgments in India has been documented for decades by feminist legal scholars. Across jurisdictions, initiatives such as the feminist judgments project have demonstrated how landmark rulings can be rewritten without patriarchal underpinnings.

The handbook, in its final section, lists key judgments that reject the stereotypes identified earlier. These are settled principles of law which are brought together in a structured and accessible manner. For instance, it is noted that the absence of injuries in a sexual violence case must be evaluated contextually. This has also been cited recently by the Court in an order concerning sexual assault where it was noted that there is no 'correct' or 'appropriate' way for a survivor to behave.

Who the handbook is meant for

More importantly, to call the handbook 'too technical' risks misunderstanding its audience. It is not addressed to survivors. It is addressed to judges and lawyers who are professionals trained to interpret statutes, weigh evidence and craft reasoned judgments.

None of this is to suggest that the handbook is beyond improvement. The handbook must evolve, particularly in response to feedback from the Bench, the bar and civil society. But, reform should be informed by an accurate understanding of what the document actually does.

The publication of the handbook marked a significant institutional acknowledgment: that language can entrench or dismantle inequality. By identifying stereotypes and grounding judicial reasoning in constitutional values, the Court took a step toward greater internal accountability. Calling it 'technical' and 'Harvard-oriented' risks diminishing the significance of that step.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The war in West Asia

The awful truth that the war on Iran has been a serious and costly miscalculation must have dawned on U.S. President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu by now. The two leaders have bitten off more than they could chew. As warmongers, they have substituted fools and rushed in where angels would have feared to tread. Mr. Trump claims that talks for a deal are underway with the 'right people' and adds that Iran is afraid to admit to talks openly. But Tehran rebuts his claim that it is begging him for a deal as totally untrue and vows to retaliate. A peace plan is said to be brokered by Pakistan.

Compounding the confusion amidst the reports of 'indirect talks' for a resolution to the conflict taking place is Pentagon's claim that thousands of U.S. Marines are heading to West Asia. The entire mass of humanity suffers for the folly of the two thick-skulled war-mongering leaders. The war must be a salutary lesson for war-prone leaders that it is easy to light a match, but difficult to douse the fire. An inadequately stated fact is that most Americans are against the war and Iranians suffer the war through no fault of their own. Broadly speaking, the repudiation of the principle that 'might is right' and the conduct of international affairs based on justice are a *sine qua non* for enduring world peace.

G. David Milton,
Maruthancode, Tamil Nadu

Before the conflict escalates further, efforts must be made to bring it to an end. This may be an opportune moment for the United Nations to intervene and work towards an amicable resolution acceptable to all parties.

India, too, could play a constructive role in encouraging de-escalation. United States President Donald Trump cannot be trusted. His statements need not be taken seriously as he contravenes his own statements every other day. It is to be hoped that this prolonged conflict will come to an end soon.

Parthasarathy N.,
Chennai

This war increasingly appears driven by political impulses rather than a coherent long-term strategy. The destruction caused by the bombardment of Iran cannot be undone. Even now, the conflict could be brought to an end if the U.S. shows the will to de-escalate and restrain further military action.

There is also concern that this could follow a trajectory similar to Iraq, leading to prolonged instability, sectarian violence, and a weakened state. Past interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan serve as stark reminders of the long-term consequences of such wars, where nations were left deeply fractured after U.S. withdrawal.

S. Sivakumar,
Kanniyakumari, Tamil Nadu

'Double engine'

It is hugely concerning to note that in the name of the 'double engine', State governments ruled by Opposition parties are being continuously discriminated against in all matters of governance, thereby affecting federalism and Centre-State relations. The other serious aspect of gubernatorial overreach is something that goes on unchecked despite judicial intervention. The 'double engine' model is hardly reassuring.

J. Anantha Padmanabhan,
Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu

The issue is transparency

The LPG, fuel and oil supply issue cannot be written off or attributed to panic buying. It is common knowledge that the shortage has been due to the ongoing war. Why is the government not coming clean on shortages? The trust shown by the people during demonetisation and the pandemic needs to be repaid by the government.

Balasubramaniam Pavani,
Secunderabad

Corrections & Clarifications

In a snippet, "Affidavits reveal jump in assets of Himanta, Gogoi" ('Assembly Polls' page, March 26, 2026), the assets of Mohammed Badruddin Ajmal, chief of the All India United Democratic Front, should have been ₹222.34 crore. The word 'crore' was missing.

The Readers' Editor's office can be contacted by Telephone: +91-44-28576347/28576300; E-mail:readerseditor@thehindu.co.in

Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the postal address.

Should men get paternity leave in India?

PARLEY

Ashwini Deshpande

is a Professor who heads the Economics Department at Ashoka University. She specialises in development economics, including gender and labour issues

Sanjoy Ghose

Senior advocate at the Supreme Court of India with extensive experience in labour law

In a ruling on maternity leave for adoptive and surrogate mothers last week, the Supreme Court called on the Union government to examine the need for a formal law recognising paternity leave for all fathers, adoptive or biological.

It noted that though parenthood is not a solitary function, fathers are often relegated to the periphery of their children's lives, especially in infancy and early childhood, terming this "a kind of injustice". Should men be given paternity leave? Ashwini Deshpande and Sanjoy Ghose discuss this in a conversation moderated by **Priscilla Jebaraj**. Edited excerpts:

Why does paternity leave matter? Who would it benefit?

Sanjoy Ghose: The judgment in the *Hamsaanandini Nanduri* case sees the question not only from the viewpoint of the mother or the father, but most importantly, the child. It said that during the impressionable formative years, the child must have access to both parents as caregivers. The gendered roles that the child absorbs – that a mother's duty is to take care and the father's duty is to work at the workplace – stems from the fact that we as a society do not have paternity leave; we do not have equal sharing of the parental burden or responsibility.

Ashwini Deshpande: The Time-Use Survey data show that Indian women spend 10 times as many hours on domestic work, which includes childcare and elderly care, compared to men. When it comes to childcare, it almost exclusively becomes the responsibility of the mother, which prevents her from accessing work opportunities outside the home. It is absolutely important for the child to have both the mother and the father present. But the norm in India is that it is the woman's role. That needs to change.

While India has no paternity leave law, there is a mandate for maternity leave. How well is that implemented?

AD: Only 10% of India's workforce works in the formal sector. So for 90%, this is not applicable. Even in the formal sector, most establishments are so small that they cannot afford either paternity nor maternity leave.

Beyond the provision of maternity leave, though, there is often discrimination, where women are hired in fewer numbers or are nudged to leave when they become pregnant, or they are bypassed for promotions or relegated to lower-level decision-making.

It is a double whammy. You don't get help at home and at your workplace, you are discriminated against. And there is a motherhood penalty in wages. After the birth of the first child, the wage gap between couples increase, even in Scandinavian countries.

A woman labourer, who is busy plucking fruits in an orchard, arranges a soft bed for her child, near Chirravuru in Guntur, Andhra Pradesh. G.N. RAO

SG: We have a plethora of laws, legislation, and protections, which govern only this minuscule, highly regulated part of the economy, though many of the most vulnerable women who need this protection are in the informal sector.

The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 provides non-termination during the period of maternity leave. But employers and employees know that discrimination can be subtle. If promotions are delayed or denied, it is very difficult for a women to prove in Court that this is directly related to her having had a child.

The vast majority of Indian workplaces don't offer paternity leave. The Central government offers two weeks to its employees who become fathers. Some multinational companies offer up to three months. The global gold standard is Sweden, which offers 480 days of paid leave per child to be shared between parents, with 90 days each of non-transferable leave. Given this spectrum of policy options, what would be most viable and useful in Indian workplaces? Let's start with the formal sector alone.

AD: In India, 480 days won't work, but I think the principle underlying the Sweden model is correct. It should be called parental leave and not maternity or paternity leave. Let the couple sort it out. But some part of it should be non-transferable so that it is compulsory for the man also to take some leave. But I think it has to be accompanied by conversations about norms shifting. Both the father and the mother need to be equally involved in the process. How many days is optimal? Well, I don't see it going beyond

> The gendered roles that the child absorbs – that a mother's duty is to take care and the father's duty is to work at the workplace – stems from the fact that we as a society do not have paternity leave
> **SANJOY GHOSE**

the six months already being given for women. So, call the same six months parental leave and insist that both parents use it.

SG: But in that model, we are assuming that the wife is also working. In many cases, if the mother is a homemaker, it will be the father who is entitled to the full six months of parental leave. My fear is that a law enacted with good intentions could have unintended consequences. It might leave a woman not only responsible for caring for her child, but also expected to support a husband who is on a six-month paid leave and not sharing responsibilities equally.

This kind of leave for fathers will only be taken in sedentary jobs. It will not happen, say, in an asset management company because it is so competitive. There are so many factors which have to be worked out. I think it is very impractical to come with a general prescription of what should be paternity leave and how it should be administered.

But we do have such a general prescription for maternity leave, don't we? However it is implemented, it is there as a right.

SG: Maternity leave is seen as a much more genuine leave, though I'm not saying that there are no caregiving fathers. But given that we are still to evolve to that level of gender justice, and patriarchy is still so rampant, you cannot blindly equate paternity leave with maternity leave.

AD: In American universities, both men and women can apply for one year's extension in the tenure clock if you had a child during that time. But research shows that young male assistant professors who get that extension end up actually publishing another paper, whereas the mothers, the female assistant professors, actually struggle with both the job and the child. So, it is a very realistic scenario in India where somebody will just sit at home for six months and will order the wife to make tea in addition to taking care of the child.

There are no easy solutions, but I think the notion that it should be parental leave, not maternity, should be the starting point. And then you work out how it should be implemented to minimise discrimination against women and to minimise misuse of that facility.

Moving beyond the formal sector, what would it take to bring this kind of parental leave to all of working India?

SG: The stated objective of the labour codes of 2020, which came into effect last November, is to bring more people into the formal economy, so that they can benefit from such policies. So, it is a long haul issue. But also, there is a patriarchal mindset which has to go. During an SC hearing on menstrual leave, there was an observation made that it might affect the careers of women if they insist on menstrual leave. Similarly, with the sexual harassment law, it was said this will discourage employing women. This attitude has to change – that these laws will make women an unattractive human resource in the job market. This bogeyman argument cannot be allowed to hold labour rights hostage. It's a long fight ahead.

AD: 90% of India's workers work in enterprises that employ between one and 10 workers. Factories with more than 300 workers are 0.5% of total enterprises, so we are talking about an industrial structure where the average number of employees per firm is very small. If you think of a nano firm with three people, and if one of them is on parental leave, you have to also think of how that enterprise is going to function. So, I think increasing the size of enterprises is an absolute precondition for parental, caregiving, menstrual, or any other kind of leave.

Or think about a gig worker. Supposing they've signed up with a platform and then the woman is going to have a child. Can she continue to work? No. So she just drops out of the labour force.

I think we live in a world of segmented labour markets and this dualism is going to characterise our industrial structure and labour force for a while to come. In countries where fathers do take paternity leave, it does have a positive impact on women's labour force participation. But in India, the larger context is non-availability of productive jobs, both for men and women. That's a big picture problem within which all of these issues are located. Patriarchal norms on gender roles do need to go, but mindsets change when objective conditions change. So I think we need to figure out what it is that we can change at the ground level.

To listen to the full interview
Scan the code or go to the link
www.thehindu.com

NOTEBOOK

Writing on world affairs from the Global South

Editorial writers depending on the West for reports must critically reject their imperial frame of reference

Srinivasan Ramani

In a recent edition of *The Economist*, the Foreign Minister of Oman, Badr Albusaidi, wrote an evocative article criticising the U.S. and Israel's rash actions in launching unlawful military strikes against Iran. He lamented how Iran's retaliation against Israel and U.S. targets in neighbouring territory, while "deeply regrettable and completely unacceptable", was "probably the only rational option available to [its] leadership", and how the war had threatened West Asia's "present security and future prosperity". This was a remarkable article by an Omani official who played a role in mediating nuclear talks between the U.S. and Iran, before the attacks plunged the world into a new crisis. Mr. Albusaidi's lament was a call to end the madness of the war even as sites in Oman were hit in Iran's retaliatory strikes.

Yet in the same issue of *The Economist*, an unsigned article on U.S. actions in cutting off Cuba's fuel imports struck a very different tone – quite an endorsement of Washington's actions, it argued that since the Trump administration is "in a position to negotiate an opening up [of Cuba's economy]", it should "enforce compliance to a far greater extent". The publication urged the U.S. to seize shadow fleet tankers used by the socialist island nation, demand political liberalisation, and keep sanctions in place "with licences being used to allow investment".

The journal had little to say about how the U.S. has asphyxiated Cuba's economy which led to three nationwide electric grid shutdowns this month alone, exacerbated a food crisis and made millions of lives miserable. Anything seems kosher against a government that is avowedly socialist, poses no threat to the U.S., but is still ludicrously marked by Washington as a "sponsor of terror".

The Economist's view on Cuba stands in sharp contrast to how it denounced the U.S.'s designs on Greenland, calling it "dangerous nonsense" that could weaken the post-war international order. That order, it would appear, deserves defending only when it protects European sovereignty, not when it pertains to Cuba's economy or Venezuela's self-determination.

This double standard is not new. In the run-up to the 2003 Iraq invasion, *The New York Times* carried Judith Miller's explosive but fabricated accounts of Saddam Hussein's weapons programmes; Bush administration officials cited the *Times*'s reporting as independent validation of their war cause. The paper's belated apology in 2004 admitted its coverage had not been "as rigorous as it should have been". By then, Iraq lay in ruins. More recently, *The Washington Post*'s editorial board hailed the Trump administration's military seizure of Venezuela's sitting president as "a major victory for American interests", even as Mr. Trump declared the U.S. would "run" the country and its oil.

Editorial writers in the Global South must recognise this hypocrisy, despite the constraints we face. We depend a lot on Western reporting when it comes to world affairs, as this is, many a time, the only available source to understand events in distant hemispheres where we do not have correspondents. Publications cited above have dozens of reporters and bureaus spanning the globe while most newspapers in Asia, Africa and Latin America barely have any in other regions. The editorial writer's dependence must be qualified with the ability to read accounts in the Western press critically, extracting only the reportable substance while discarding the imperial frame of reference.

Our task is also to be critical of anti-democratic impulses in our own backyards as much as elsewhere, while taking firm positions against the assertion that sovereignty is a privilege only for the powerful. Governments in the Global South derive their legitimacy through diverse ways, some through liberal-democratic mandates, and others through genuine revolutionary histories; that legitimacy is not for Washington or London to adjudicate on.

srinivasan.vr@thehindu.co.in

PICTURE OF THE WEEK

Seeking the divine

Festival haze: The faithful offering prayers on Eid at the Jama Masjid, which has been enveloped in fog, in New Delhi on March 21. The cold weather is because of western disturbances emerging from the Mediterranean. The previous day, March 20, was recorded as the coldest day of March in Delhi in six years. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

FROM THE ARCHIVES — The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 27, 1976

Chances of Callaghan becoming British PM

London, March 26: The British public at large are a little excited and surprised to find that the Labour Party remains confused and divided over the choice of its leader and next Prime Minister.

While the Foreign Secretary, Mr. James Callaghan, appears to be the most likely man to become the next Prime Minister, next Tuesday, one cannot entirely rule out the chances of left-wing Michael Foot (Employment Minister), whose performance on the first ballot was spectacular when he led Mr. Callaghan by six votes last night. The extreme left-wing leader, Mr. Wedgewood Benn, also came up with 37 votes and immediately withdrew from the contest in favour of Mr. Foot. What remains to be seen now is how many votes the left-wing camp will pick up from the party's centre and right-wing groups. Mr. Foot has come on top of the ballot, but his overall lead over Mr. Callaghan is yet too narrow for him for eventual victory.

Most analysts feel that Mr. Callaghan is now within the touching distance of 10, Downing Street.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 27, 1926

Asylum press almanack and directory

The Asylum Press Almanack and Directory for the year 1926 is an improved edition containing much more useful information than the previous ones. The bulk of the volume is naturally increased, containing as it does about 350 additional pages. There are certain striking changes in the contents of the volume. Greater details are given in the history and development of Railways in South India.

From Page One

Iran grants Hormuz passage to India

The Iranian frigate was attacked and sunk by a U.S. Navy submarine on March 4 off the coast of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean while returning from exercises in Visakhapatnam. At least 87 sailors were killed in the attack. *IRIS Lavan* and *IRIS Bushehr*, which also came to the region to take part in the drills, have now docked in Kochi and Sri Lanka's Trincomalee, respectively.

The Strait of Hormuz, through which more than a hundred ships passed daily before the war, has seen traffic plunge to single digits since the conflict began.

At least four India-flagged ships – *Jag Vasant, Pine Gas, Shivalik,* and *Nanda Devi* – have transited the strait since the U.S. and Israel launched the war on Iran on February 28.

Mr. Araghchi, who was Iran's chief negotiator with the U.S. before the war, also said no talks were being held with the U.S. "I state firmly that there has been no negotiation with the U.S. However, in recent days, the American side has begun sending various messages through different intermediaries.. and we have responded by stating our positions. It is simply an exchange of messages through friends," he said. "At present, our position is to continue resisting, continue defending our country. We have no intention of negotiating."

U.S. President Donald Trump, who "postponed" on Monday a threatened strike on Iran's power infrastructure, has said Washington is in talks with Tehran. Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar said "indirect talks" between the two sides are taking place through messages being relayed by Pakistan. "The U.S. has shared 15 points, being deliberated upon by Iran. Brotherly countries of Turkiye and Egypt, among others, are also extending their support to this initiative," Mr. Dar wrote in a social media post.

Mr. Trump on Thursday said Iran should "better get serious soon" in talks, "before it's too late, because once that happens, there is no turning back". U.S. media have reported that the Pentagon is sending more troops to West Asia in preparation for a possible ground offensive against Iran.

Bus catches fire after crash in A.P.; 14 killed

Home Minister Vangalapudi Anitha, who inspected the accident site, told *The Hindu* the driver seemed to be *prima facie* at fault but complete facts will be known after the probe that is under way. "The bus moved onto the opposite lane and hit the lorry... complete facts will be known soon," she said. Tests indicated the driver was not under the influence of alcohol, she added.

The owner and driver Harikrishna was also injured and is now being provided treatment while under police custody, according to Markapuram Collector P. Raja Babu.

Fire department officials said the blaze was exacerbated by fuel in the lorry's tank and the bus air-conditioning battery system, which caught fire following a suspected short circuit. The bus reportedly contained several inflammable materials, causing the flames to spread rapidly.

DNA profiling to identify dead

"We broke open the bus windows, and rescued those who could be saved," Markapuram Circle Inspector P. Subbarao said. The bodies of the deceased were transported to hospitals within an hour. DNA profiling is being carried out to identify the charred bodies, and the remains are expected to be handed over to families by Friday.

The State government announced financial aid to the victims, including ₹5 lakh to the kin of the deceased and ₹2 lakh to each of the injured. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also expressed his condolences, promising *ex gratia* of ₹2 lakh to the families of those who died and ₹50,000 to the injured.

India has oil for 60 days, LPG for a month: Centre

Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry says fuel pumps are adequately stocked; it adds that domestic LPG production has been ramped up by 40%, meeting more than 60% of country's requirements

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

People stand in a queue with their LPG cylinders amid reports of a nationwide shortage in Srinagar on Thursday. IMRAN NISSAR

In a bid to end speculation about India's energy stocks amid the escalating tensions in West Asia, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG) on Thursday said that India has so far arranged a month of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) supplies through imports, with constant additional procurement ongoing.

A statement said that India has reduced its reliance on imports for LPG, with the country producing "much more" than it needs to import.

On crude oil, the government said Indian oil companies have secured supplies that would suffice for the next 60 days, while the country already holds stocks enough for 60 days.

These 60 days of current stocks, which include crude, diesel and petrol, are an increase over the 50 days of total stocks the government had said it had at the start of the war.

Cumulatively, India currently has a total reserve (storage) capacity of 74 days of fuel stocks, including crude oil, petrol, and diesel.

'Local production up'

"Nearly two months of steady supply is available for every Indian citizen regardless of what happens globally," the Ministry said. "Next two months of crude procurement has also been secured. India is completely secure for the next many months and the quantity in strategic cavern storage becomes secondary in such a supply situation."

While emphasising that there is no LPG shortage in the country, the government said that India was now producing more LPG than it needs to import. It said that, since the LPG control order issued earlier, domestic refinery production has been ramped up by 40%. This, it said, has brought the daily output to 50,000 tonnes, which is more than 60% of domestic requirements.

Additionally, with respect to imports, the government said that 8,00,000 tonnes of LPG cargoes are en route to India from the United States, Russia, Australia, and other countries.

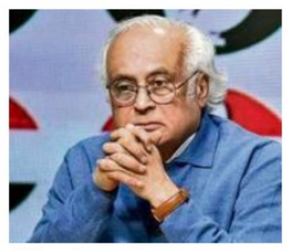
"Approximately one full month of supply is firmly arranged, with additional procurement being finalised continuously," it stated.

The government also warned of action against misleading social media posts and fabricated claims of shortages.

Earlier in the day, while seeking to reassure stakeholders amidst looming concerns over fuel supplies, Vikas Kaushal, chairman and managing director at state-owned Hindustan Petroleum, stated there has been a sudden surge in demand for petrol and diesel across the country. "Over the past two days, sales have increased by more than 15% on an all-India basis, with certain locations experiencing spikes of over 50% compared to average daily sales," he wrote on social media, adding, "Our supply chains remain strong, our outlets are fully stocked..."

'Pak.'s mediator role in U.S.-Iran conflict a shame for India'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI


Jairam Ramesh

The Congress on Wednesday said India's diplomacy had suffered an "embarrassment" after Pakistan was reportedly considered for a mediating role between Iran and the U.S. amid the ongoing West Asia tensions.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said in a post on X that the development reflected a setback to India's regional diplomacy and criticised the Union government's foreign policy approach.

Mr. Ramesh questioned Pakistan's suitability as a mediator, citing its past record, including allegations of sponsoring terrorism, harbouring terrorist Osama bin Laden and being involved in nuclear proliferation.

He also referred to Pakistan's record of waging war against its own citizens and religious minorities in provinces such as Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and bombing civilian and medical facilities in Afghanistan. "That Pakistan can even be considered for such a mediating role is a most damning indictment of both the substance and style of Prime Minister Modi's diplomacy, which has been full of bombast and marked by cowardice," he alleged.

Referring to recent remarks by Pakistan Army Chief Asim Munir, he alleged that India had not been able to effectively counter Pakistan's narrative internationally. He further claimed that Pakistan's growing engagement with the U.S., indicated its renewed relevance on the global stage.

"The External Affairs Minister said that India is not a broker country. Be that as it may, the fact remains that the colossal failures in our diplomacy, outreach, and narrative management have made a broken country a broker country...," he said

Women's reservation: Centre rejects all-party meet

Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

The government has rejected the Congress's proposal to hold an all-party meeting on the women's reservation Act after the ongoing Assembly election campaign for four States and a Union Territory, arguing that any delay would jeopardise the legislation's implementation before the 2029 Lok Sabha election.

The Centre has proposed that the delimitation exercise essential for operationalising the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam be carried out on the basis of the 2011 Census rather than waiting for the ongoing enumeration.

Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju wrote to Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge insisting that timely implementation of the Act is a shared responsibility of all political parties. Waiting for the Assembly polls to conclude, he said, would push back the timeline.

Jaishankar, French counterpart discuss Iran, Hormuz at G7 meet

Sriram Lakshman
LONDON

Close coordination: Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar meets with France's Foreign Affairs Minister Jean-Noel Barrot on Thursday. AFP

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar arrived in France on a two-day visit to represent India as a partner country at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the G7 (Group of Seven) advanced economies.

The Minister held bilateral talks with his French counterpart Jean-Noël Barrot in Abbaye des-Vaux-de-Cernay on Thursday, which included an "in depth" discussion on West Asia as per the French government's readout of the meeting.

The two Ministers "agreed to continue their close coordination with a view to working jointly towards ensuring the security of the Strait of Hormuz," the readout said. The meeting comes just after Israel claimed to have killed Iranian commander Alireza Tangsiri, who Israel said was directly responsible for the closing of the Strait.

The participation of Mr. Jaishankar in the G7 meetings signified "the importance France attaches to closely associating India – currently holding the BRICS presidency – with its G7 presidency", the French government said.

International links

The Ministers welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's participation in the G7 Summit, scheduled for June 15-17 in Évian, France and underscored India's contribution to the G7's work on addressing major macroeconomic imbalances and improving international partnerships, as per the readout.

Front and centre of the G7 agenda this week is the war in Iran and its impact on global energy and stock markets. Discussions on the Russia-Ukraine war and the reform of multilateralism are also on the cards.

"We will work to bring about a new international order and to build a more balanced and fairer system, underpinned by a renewed multilateralism. Reforming global governance and combatting cross-cutting threats require a collective commitment which extends beyond G7 members alone," Mr. Barrot said in a statement.

Bilateral talks

Mr. Jaishankar also met bilaterally with the Foreign Ministers of Canada, Japan and South Korea. Talks with Canadian Foreign Minister Anita Anand focused on advancing the bilateral agenda and also dwelt on developments in West Asia, Mr. Jaishankar said on social media site X.

At a session on global governance, Mr. Jaishankar emphasised the urgency of UN Security Council reforms. India and several other countries have been seeking a permanent seat on the body.

The Minister also raised energy challenges and concerns around fertilizer supplies and food security impacting the Global South.

Friday's session on Iran will only be for G7 countries and a session on Ukraine will be in the G7 and Ukraine format.

Lapses by Census officials invite prison term

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

The Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India (RG&CCI) has written to States that if a Census official refuses to perform their duty or damages or destroys any Census document, they shall face up to three years of imprisonment.

In a letter to the Chief Secretaries on March 17, Mritunjay Kumar Narayan said that for smooth conduct of Census operations, it is necessary that Census officers engaged in the conduct of houselisting, housing census, and population enumeration are informed of their specific duties under the Census Act. "Along with the duties, penalties have also been prescribed under Section 11 of the Census Act, 1948," the letter said.

The letter said that the enumerators must "conduct proper probing while maintaining a polite behaviour" during field visits.

S-400 deliveries expedited as India enhances air defence

Saurabh Trivedi
NEW DELHI

Strengthening systems: India signed a $5.43 billion deal with Russia in 2018 for five squadrons of the S-400 system. REUTERS

India is set to receive the remaining two units of the S-400 air defence system from Russia this year, with one expected as early as next month and the final delivery scheduled for November.

A senior official in the Ministry of Defence confirmed that India is in close coordination with its Russian counterparts to ensure timely delivery. The matter has been discussed at the highest levels.

"Out of the remaining two S-400 systems, one will be delivered next month (April) and the last one by November," the official said, adding that the timeline has been expedited after earlier delays caused by supply chain disruptions and the Russia-Ukraine war. Earlier, it was indicated that final deliveries could extend to 2027.

India signed a $5.43 billion deal with Russia in 2018 for five squadrons of the S-400 system. So far, three units have been inducted into service, with the remaining two now expected to be delivered within the stipulated timeframe.

The issue of delivery timelines was discussed during a bilateral meeting between Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and his Russian counterpart Andrey Belousov, in June last year.

China shows willingness to work with India for 'common interests'

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

In Delhi, the Chinese Ambassador called for greater cultural cooperation between the two countries

China is willing to work with India for upholding "common interests" in the Global South and the BRICS grouping, said the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of China on Thursday.

Following a meeting between Foreign Minister Wang Yi and outgoing Indian Ambassador, Pradeep Kumar Rawat, in Beijing, Chinese MoFA spokesperson Lin Jian said the two sides view each other as "development opportunities".

The remarks from Beijing coincided with remarks by Chinese Ambassador Xu Feihong who on the same day called for greater cooperation between the two sides and said there are "some" stakeholders who do not favour positive relation between India and China.

Following the meeting between Mr. Wang and Mr. Rawat, Mr. Lin said, "China is willing to work with India to implement the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, continue to regard each other than threats, treat each other as partners instead of rivals, expand mutually beneficial cooperation in various fields, safeguard the common interests of the Global South, strengthen multilateral collaboration in mechanisms such as BRICS."

Cultural cooperation

In Delhi, the Chinese ambassador reflected similar positive sentiments and said Indian yoga, aromatherapy and cuisine were gathering popularity in China and called for greater cultural cooperation.

"China and India are neighbours that cannot be moved apart. It should be the right choice for both sides to be good neighbourly friends and partners that help each other succeed, and realise the 'Dragon-Elephant Tango'. However, some people are unwilling to see China and India live in harmony," said ambassador Xu Feihong.

BJP got donations of over ₹6,074 cr. last year

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The BJP has declared a total of over ₹6,074.015 crore from 5,522 donations for the financial year 2024-25, which was more than 10 times the aggregate declared by the other national parties for the same period, according to an analysis by the Association for Democratic Reforms.

The BJP has declared a total of ₹6,074.015 crore from 5,522 donations followed by ₹517.394 crore declared by the Congress. The BJP's donations are more than 10 times the aggregate declared by Congress, AAP, CPI(M) and NPEP for the same period.

APPEAL

Baby Shivansh Kumar, Manipal Hospitals No.MH018103491, 3 months is Diagnosed from Congenital Heart Disease, TAPVC Supracardiac - Unobstructed in the circuit, all four Pulmonary Veins forming a common chamber and Draining into Innominate Vein through an ascending Vertical vein, Restrictive PFO R-L, RA and RV Dilated, Severe PAH, fair RV function. He requires undergo Supracardiac TAPVC surgical repair. The Estimated cost of the surgery is Rs.6,00,000/-.

Please send donation however small by Cheque/D.D/M.O Fav. **Save Poor Lives** A/c Shivansh Kumar, **Our A/c Details:** S/B A/c No. 20000913487. S.B.I. R.A.Puram, IFSC CODE:SBIN0001855. Please Donate by G-pay No.9884607377, UPI Id: savepoorlives@oksbi. Donations are exempted under 80G of I.T. ACT.

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ASSEMBLY POLLS

Ram Navami turns campaign stage in Bengal

With Assembly polls around the corner, both the BJP and the Trinamool Congress took part in Ram Navami celebrations on Thursday, with rallies that took over Kolkata and Howrah, and which doubled up as poll campaign platforms.

Leader of the Opposition Suvendu Adhikari led a Ram Navami rally in Bhawanipur.

"We want jobs in hand, food in the belly, roof over the head, good governance, and protection for women," he said during the rally as he met voters along the route.

On the other hand, Trinamool leaders and candidates Kunal Ghosh and Madan Mitra also took part in separate Ram Navami programmes.

"This is not a Hindi rashtra; people have the freedom to celebrate any festival here," Mr. Mitra said.

BJP leader Suvendu Adhikari during a Ram Navami rally in Kolkata on Thursday. ANI

Trinamool worker shot dead in Kolkata

A Trinamool Congress worker has been shot dead in Kolkata. The Kolkata Police have arrested four people in connection with the killing.

The deceased, Rahul Dey, was shot dead in clashes that erupted in Baghajatin area of south Kolkata on Wednesday night. Another person, Jeet Mukherjee, was injured in the clashes and is under treatment.

Local people reportedly heard gunshots late in the night and alerted police.

Locals people said that the deceased, the injured, and those arrested had a criminal history. It is not known whether the murder was political or followed a clash between gangs.

Tensions also rose in the Basanti area of South 24 Parganas, where a BJP rally was allegedly attacked by local Trinamool workers.

"The BJP is committed to protecting people, land, and we will not allow anyone to work against this. A firm handling of illegal migrants is key

HIMANTA BISWA SARMA
Assam Chief Minister

34 candidates in fray for bypolls in Karnataka

As many as 34 candidates are in the fray for bypolls to the Bagalkot and Davanagere South constituencies, according to the CEO's office. The bypolls were necessitated following the deaths of Congress MLAs Shamanur Shivashankarappa and H. Y. Meti in Davanagere South and Bagalkote respectively. PTI

"Elections will come and go, but after that? There is no party other than the Trinamool which can come to power in Bengal or remain at the helm

MAMATA BANERJEE
West Bengal Chief Minister

Battle ready: Nandigram is my responsibility, Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee said at a rally in West Bengal. PTI

Abhishek takes the fight to Suvendu's backyard in Nandigram

Shiv Sahay Singh
Shrabana Chatterjee
KOLKATA

Taking the electoral contest to Nandigram, the stronghold of Bharatiya Janata Party leader Suvendu Adhikari, Trinamool Congress general secretary Abhishek Banerjee held a public meeting at the constituency in Purba Medinipur on Wednesday, and said that he would personally keep a track of the developments there.

Mr. Adhikari is contesting in two constituencies, Nandigram and Bhabanipur. In Bhabanipur, he is challenging Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and has said that he will defeat her for the second time.

The Trinamool has decided to make things difficult for the BJP leader in return. The party has fielded Pabitra Kar, a former BJP worker to contest against Mr. Adhikari. In fact, Mr. Kar, once close to Mr. Adhikari, had joined the Trinamool hours before his candidature was announced.

"Nandigram is my responsibility. All of you take responsibility for the coming 25 days. For the next five years, I will be responsible for Nandigram," Mr. Banerjee said addressing a workers' meeting in Nandigram on Wednesday.

The party's second-in-command announced that if the Trinamool wins Nandigram, then a *Sebaashray* camp would be organised there every year. *Sebaashray* is a flagship initiative of Mr. Banerjee through which he organises health camps annually.

He urged party workers to resist the BJP without fear. "A message should be conveyed to those who jump around too much that after the results are declared on May 4...we will play DJ music along with Rabindra Sangeet," he said. Several State BJP leaders saw the remark by the Trinamool leader as a threat to political opponents.

2021 results

Mr. Banerjee also reflected on the results of the 2021 Assembly election, when the Chief Minister lost to Mr. Adhikari by a margin of 1,956 votes. The Trinamool general secretary said that he had heard reports of sabotage in that election. In 2021, Mr. Adhikari received 1,10,764 votes against Ms. Banerjee's 1,08,808.

Nandigram has over 68,000 Muslims making up just over 26% of the electorate. The electorate in the constituency, after the release of the final draft rolls, stands at 2,68,378. Around 10,616 were marked under adjudication after the final rolls were published on February 28.

Mr. Adhikari said that there was a campaign against him that he was only an MLA for the Hindus of Nandigram.

"During my campaign [in 2021], I asked for everyone's vote. Muslims did not vote for me so I became an MLA only with the support of the Hindu voters," Mr. Adhikari said, speaking at a BJP workers meet.

"I came here to ask a question. Have you seen me change in any way since I have been a fighter at the ground level here in 2008, or as an MP in 2014, or as a Minister in 2016, or as a Leader of the Opposition in 2021?" Mr. Adhikari asked party workers.

The BJP leader, who played a key role in the struggle against forcible land acquisition in Nandigram, said that his opponent had no contribution in the struggle and could not name the martyrs of the movement.

T.N.'s Nitish or assertive chief? AIADMK leader confronts a battle of perceptions

BJP leaders avoid naming Palaniswami as National Democratic Alliance's Chief Ministerial face, but he asserts himself in seat-sharing talks; the ruling DMK in the State claims that the AIADMK is subservient to the Modi government, framing the Assembly election as a Tamil Nadu vs Delhi contest

IN FOCUS

D. Suresh Kumar
CHENNAI

Political narratives, if left unchallenged, can tilt the balance in elections. All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) general secretary Edappadi K. Palaniswami appears more cognisant of this than anyone else in the electoral field of Tamil Nadu this election season.

Ever since he reluctantly returned to the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) last April at the behest of the BJP's principal poll strategist and Union Home Minister, Amit Shah, Mr. Palaniswami has been under attack from his rivals, chiefly from the ruling DMK and its allies.

Over the past few years, the DMK front has built a strong political narrative projecting the AIADMK leadership as being subservient to the BJP and the Narendra Modi-led Union government.

This perception was bolstered by the decision of the erstwhile AIADMK government, under both O. Panneerselvam and Mr. Palaniswami, to embrace certain Central schemes that Jayalalithaa, their predecessor, had strongly opposed during her lifetime. This included the Ujwal DISCOM Assurance Yojana (UDAY), which Tamil Nadu joined in January 2017, just a month after her death.

Tamil Nadu vs Delhi

In recent times, this narrative gained further momentum after Mr. Modi and Mr. Shah repeatedly avoided endorsing Mr. Palaniswami as the NDA's chief ministerial face in the Assembly election. Instead, the two leaders have publicly advocated a BJP-inclusive NDA government in Tamil Nadu, led by the AIADMK.

It is against this backdrop that DMK president and Chief Minister M.K. Stalin is attempting to frame this Assembly election as a Tamil Nadu-versus-New Delhi contest.

Some leaders, including Congress MP B. Manickam Tagore and State Transport Minister S.S. Sivasankar, have warned that Mr. Palaniswami could potentially become the Nitish Kumar of Tamil Nadu. What they imply is that the BJP could, at some point, force him to step down as Chief Minister, much like Mr. Kumar, who has offered to resign as Bihar Chief Minister.

Critics also point to developments in Maharashtra, where splits in the Shiv Sena and Nationalist Congress Party are widely believed to have been encouraged by the BJP. Mr. Stalin has gone so far as to accuse Mr. Palaniswami of offering an "*adimai sasanam* (slavery charter)" to the Union Government.

Man of the moment: AIADMK chief Edappadi K Palaniswami with BJP leader Tamilisai Soundararajan during a roadshow in the Mylapore constituency in Chennai on Wednesday. PTI

Some of Mr. Palaniswami's actions and developments within the NDA in Tamil Nadu have lent weight to such criticism. For instance, the AIADMK leader has travelled to New Delhi twice to meet Mr. Shah to discuss the contours of the electoral alliance. This is a reversal of the typical process, where leaders of national parties who have limited influence in the Dravidian State visit Tamil Nadu to negotiate alliances with the dominant regional players.

Additionally, some allies, such as T.T.V. Dhinakaran of the Amma Makkal Munnetra Kazhagam, had sought to bypass the AIADMK entirely, saying they would deal directly with the BJP on seat-sharing arrangements.

Pushing back

After these developments, however, Mr. Palaniswami appears to have mounted a calibrated counter to this perception. This week, he took many by surprise by ensuring that NDA leaders – including Piyush Goyal (BJP), R. Anbumani (PMK), and Mr. Dhinakaran – visited MGR Maaligai, the AIADMK headquarters in Chennai.

In their presence, Mr. Palaniswami took centre stage and announced the number of seats allotted to each party, underscoring his authority within the alliance. He also pushed back by noting that DMK leaders such as Kanimozhi had also flown to Delhi to meet Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

In a subtle yet significant signal, he allotted the BJP 27 seats, one short of what the DMK conceded to the Congress under pressure. He also concluded the NDA seat-sharing exercise ahead of the DMK, which this time faced a more arduous task in persuading its allies to accept fewer seats. Going a step further, Mr. Palaniswami has already declared the constituencies to be contested by allies and released the AIADMK's first list of 23 candidates. He has also resumed his campaign, canvassing votes for the BJP's Tamilisai Soundararajan, even before her party had formally announced its candidates.

More importantly, he conceded just one seat in Chennai district to the BJP, notwithstanding the party's improved performance in the region in the last Lok Sabha election.

Nonetheless, the decision of Tamil Maanila Congress (Moopanar) leader G.K. Vasan to field five candidates on the BJP's lotus symbol, along with a similar move by another outfit, has effectively increased the BJP's tally beyond what was formally allotted to it.

For those familiar with Mr. Palaniswami's political trajectory, such manoeuvres are not entirely surprising. He was, after all, the leader who managed to sideline Jayalalithaa's long-time aide V.K. Sasikala. He has also asserted himself within the AIADMK by outmanoeuvring other leaders.

His battle is far from over. His real test will come on May 4 and should his party come within striking distance of power, it remains to be seen whether he can resist the BJP's desire to be a partner in government.

Bitter battle for nine seats that can turn electoral fortunes in Kerala

A.S. Jayanth
KOZHIKODE

Major three-cornered contests are happening in at least nine constituencies in Kerala that could even determine the outcome of the Assembly election.

While six of these constituencies have MLAs from the Left Democratic Front (LDF), led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist), the rest are represented by the Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF).

Nemom is so far the only constituency in Kerala to have elected a member from the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) to the Assembly. Senior BJP leader O. Rajagopal had defeated K. Sivankutty of the LDF in 2016. Mr. Sivankutty wrested the seat back in the 2021 polls. He is now pitted against BJP State president Rajeev Chandrasekhar and K.S. Sabarinadhan of the UDF, who is a councillor in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation and former MLA.

In Vattiyurkkavu in Thiruvananthapuram, NDA candidates had finished second in the 2016 and 2021 elections. However, the Congress could claim the second spot in the 2019 by-poll when V.K. Prasanth, the incumbent MLA, was first elected to the Assembly. Mr. Prashanth is now seeking a third term. His NDA rival is R. Sreelekha, a former DGP and councillor in the Thiruvananthapuram Corporation. The UDF candidate is K. Muraleedharan, who won the Assembly polls from here in 2011 and 2016.

Prominent contests: The LDF, the UDF and the NDA are locked in three-cornered fights in these constituencies. NIRMAL HARINDRAN

Kazhakuttam is another segment where the NDA is on a strong wicket. The BJP had finished second here in the previous two elections. Right now, Kadakampally Surendran of the LDF is contesting against the BJP's V. Muraleedharan again. The UDF candidate is T. Sharatchandra Prasad.

The BJP is waging a high-stakes battle in the temple town of Aranmula in Pathanamthitta, where Health Minister Veena George is seeking a third term. The NDA has fielded Mr. Rajasekharan from here in a bid to utilise his popularity. The Congress nominee is Abin Varkey, who could influence a section of the community votes that reportedly went in favour of Ms. George in earlier elections.

Close contest

Thrissur had witnessed a close contest in the 2021 polls. Padmaja Venugopal is the NDA candidate. While the UDF has fielded former Mayor Rajan Pallan, the LDF candidate is poet Alankode Leelakrishnan.

The Palakkad seat is already hogging the limelight with Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan alleging a "deal" between the Left and the BJP here. According to Mr. Satheesan, the LDF has put up an Independent candidate here, hotelier N.M.R. Razak, to split anti-BJP votes that could go in favour of the UDF candidate, actor Ramesh Pisharody. The NDA candidate here is Shobha Surendran.

Manjeshwaram also has a history of the NDA narrowly missing a chance to win. K. Surendran and A.K.M. Ashraf are the NDA and the UDF candidates respecitvely. The LDF has nominated K.R. Jayananda.

Though Pala in Kottayam and Nattika in Thrissur have not had a triangular poll fight so far, this election could be a different story. In Pala, Kerala Congress (Mani) chairman Jose K. Mani of the LDF is taking on incumbent MLA Mani C. Kappan of the UDF again. The NDA has fielded Shone George, the son of former Poonjar MLA P.C. George. In Nattika, incumbent MLA C.C. Mukundan, is contesting as an NDA candidate against LDF's Geetha Gopi. Sunil Laloor is the UDF nominee.

Illegal inducements worth ₹408 crore seized till now: EC

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The seizures include precious metals valued at ₹23 crore and other freebies at ₹163.3 crore

The Election Commission on Thursday said over ₹408.82 crore worth of illicit inducements, including ₹17.44 crore in cash and liquor estimated at ₹37.68 crore and drugs at ₹167.38 crore, had been seized through a coordinated approach involving multi-enforcement agencies in the four poll-bound States and one Union Territory.

Apart from the liquor and drugs, the seizures include precious metals worth ₹23 crore and other freebies worth over ₹163.3 crore, the poll body said in a statement.

The seizures have been made through a coordinated approach involving multi-enforcement agencies across different States/Union Territories during the one-month period since the activation of the Electronic Seizure Management System (ESMS) on February 26, it said.

The commission has directed the States to ensure strict compliance with the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

On March 24, the poll panel held a meeting to review readiness and enhance coordination, and directed officials to ensure violence-free, intimidation-free, and inducement-free elections.

Flying squads

Over 5,173 flying squads have been deployed across the States to ensure that the complaints are attended to within 100 minutes. Besides this, over 5,200 Static Surveillance Teams (SSTs) have been deployed for setting up surprise *nakas* at different locations.

The commission has stressed that the enforcement authorities should ensure that ordinary citizens are not inconvenienced or harassed during the checking and inspection for the enforcement of these directives.

District grievance committees have been set up to address any grievances. Citizens and parties can report model code violations using the C-Vigil module on ECINET.

INBRIEF

Maharashtra Minister's video with transwoman stirs row

Maharashtra Minister Narhari Zirwal has landed in a controversy after his video with a transwoman surfaced on social media, with the Opposition Congress demanding the NCP leader's sacking over his "obscene and unethical behaviour". The Congress alleged that the video shows Mr. Zirwal, who is Food and Drugs Administration (FDA) Minister, in a "compromising position" with the transwoman at his official residence. The Opposition party condemned the incident saying it showed the moral decline in Maharashtra's politics, and called the Minister's conduct a "blot on public life". PTI

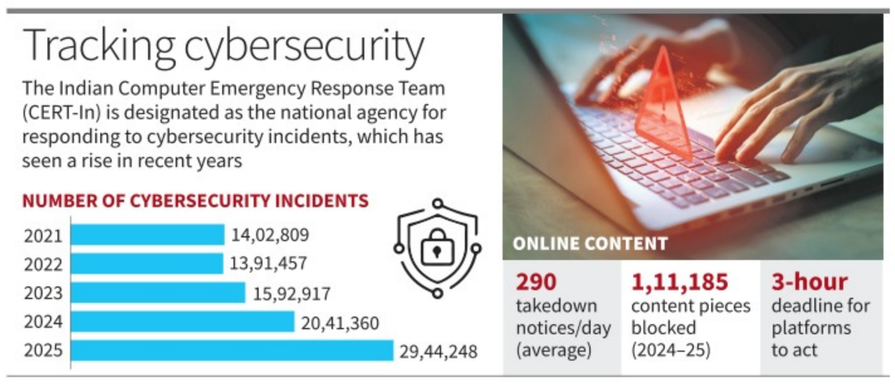
CBI arrests human trafficking 'kingpin' in cyberscam case

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has arrested a person for his alleged involvement as a "kingpin" in trafficking unsuspecting Indian citizens to cyberscam compounds operating in Myanmar. The accused has been identified as Sunil Nellathu Ramakrishnan, alias Krish, a resident of Mumbai. During the CBI probe, he emerged as one of the main "facilitators" in the trafficking network, through which victims were being illegally transported for exploitation in the scam centres in Southeast Asia. Searches on his residential premises led to the seizure of digital evidence allegedly linked to human trafficking operations in Myanmar and Cambodia.

Home Ministry sends 290 takedown notices a day

Social media platforms required to remove unlawful content within three hours of receipt of order; Ministry report also shows sharp rise in number of cybersecurity incidents in recent years

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI



Within a year of being empowered to directly issue takedown notices for online content, the Union Home Ministry issued an average of 290 such notices every day, according to the Ministry's data.

On March 13, 2024, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) was designated as the Ministry's agency to perform the functions under Section 79 (3) (b) of the Information Technology Act, 2000.

According to the Ministry's annual report for 2024-25, published on Wednesday, till March 31, 2025, "1,11,185 suspicious online content have been blocked under Section 79 (3)(b) of IT Act."

Though Section 79(1) of the IT Act shields online platforms and social media intermediaries from legal liability for content posted by users, Section 79(3)(b) of the IT Act says that the shield will not apply if they fail to take down the content despite being flagged by government authorities.

1,11,185 pieces of suspicious online content have been blocked under Section 79(3)(b) of IT Act, says report

Social media intermediary X had challenged this provision and the Sahyog portal, which enables police across the country to send such notices through a common platform, in the Karnataka High Court but the petition was turned down by the court in 2025.

The Hindu reported on March 29, 2025 that nearly a third of the 66 takedown notices sent to X by the I4C sought removal of content about Union Ministers and Central government agencies. Social media platforms and other intermediaries are required to remove unlawful content within three hours of the receipt of an order of a court of competent jurisdiction or a reasoned intimation by the Appropriate Government or its agency, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) informed Parliament recently.

Besides the Home Ministry, there are other government departments empowered under the particular section to issue takedown notices.

Cybersecurity cases

Separately, on March 24, the Ministry informed the Lok Sabha that the number of cybersecurity incidents reported in India has risen sharply over the past five years, according to data tracked by the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), the national agency responsible for responding to cyber threats.

CERT-In, which functions under provisions of Section 70B of the Information Technology Act, 2000, recorded 29.44 lakh cyber security incidents in 2025, the highest figure in the last five years. The number of such incidents was 20.41 lakh in 2024.

As per CERT-In, the highest number of cyber incidents reported is from National Capital Territory of Delhi.

10 killed, 35 injured as bus collides with mini-truck in M.P.

Mehul Malpani
BHOPAL

Police and ambulances respond to the fatal bus–mini truck collision in MP. ANI

At least 10 persons were killed and 35 injured after a bus they were travelling in met with an accident and overturned in Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh on Thursday, officials said. The bus was returning from an event attended by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav.

According to officials, the accident took place around 7.15 p.m. on the Nagpur highway, about 25 km from the district headquarters, when the private bus, carrying more than 45 passengers, collided head-on with a loading mini-truck and overturned.

Chhindwara Collector Harendra Narayan told *The Hindu* that 10 persons, including three women and a child, were killed and about 35 people injured. The deceased include the drivers of both vehicles.

He said that while those receiving treatment at the district hospital were not out of danger, one critical patient had been referred to Nagpur in Maharashtra. "We have sent some officials to Nagpur as well to assist the family during treatment

Mr. Yadav attended a government function to launch development works worth over ₹500 crore as well as a religious event in Chhindwara. The victims were returning from the event, which got over around 6 p.m., in an administration-organised private vehicle.

"Both the vehicles were in speed and as the bus tried to overtake another vehicle, the massive collision happened," Mr. Narayan said.

Mr. Yadav expressed grief over the deaths and said a team of doctors had been sent from Jabalpur to Chhindwara and Nagpur. He said the injured would be treated free of cost.

The Hindu Group to host World of Women Awards

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

The Hindu Group is all set to host the "World of Women (WoW) Awards 2026", a platform that recognises exceptional women across business, science, arts, culture, education, sports and beyond, in Chennai at 6.30 p.m. on Friday.

Over the years, the WoW Awards have emerged as a powerful initiative that spotlights inspiring journeys of women who have broken barriers and created meaningful impact. The 2026 edition will honour distinguished achievers from diverse domains, reaffirming the platform's commitment to recognising excellence and inspiring future generations. Themed "Breaking ceilings. Reaching for the Skies", the edition will celebrate women who continue to challenge norms, push boundaries, and build a more inclusive and progressive future.

The event will bring together leaders, changemakers, and visionaries, who have not only excelled in their respective fields but have also contributed to societal transformation.

Live viewing

Viewers can take part in the celebration live on newsth.live/THWOW

The World of Women Awards 2026 is presented by GRT Jewellers and co-presented by Sathyabama Institute of Science and Technology (Deemed to be University). The event is held in association with DRA Homes and Gold Winner.

The associate partner is Aqua Group and Gopuram, the banking partner is DBS Bank India Ltd, the beauty partner Mysore Sandal Soap, the television partners are *Puthiya Thalaimurai* and *Puthu Yugam*, and the industry partner is Madras Management Association.

President urged not to grant assent to Transgender Amendment Bill

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

A day after the Rajya Sabha passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Amendment Bill, 2026, around 140 lawyers and women's rights activists wrote to President Droupadi Murmu urging her not to grant assent to the Bill, pointing out "constitutional violations" in its provisions and "procedural infirmities" in the way it was passed.

Transgender activists protest against the Transgender Persons Amendment Bill at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Thursday. ANI

The letter was written by All-India Feminist Alliance (ALIFA), a pan-India collective of grassroots organisations, along with the National Alliance for Justice, Accountability and Rights (NAJAR), a forum of lawyers and legal professionals.

The groups said in their letter that they were "extremely alarmed and distressed at the undue and unjustifiable haste" with which the Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

They said that not taking public and stakeholder consultation violated the mandate of the Pre-Legislative Consultation Policy, 2014.

Members of the National Council for Transgender Persons had said that they were not consulted. Soon after the Rajya Sabha passed it on Wednesday, two members and representatives submitted their resignations, the letter pointed out.

The letter emphasised that in the *National Legal Services Authority v. Union of India* (2014) judgment, the Supreme Court held that the right to self-determination of gender is a fundamental right protected under Articles 14 and 19 of the Constitution.

Further, they said the introduction of a medical board, whose recommendation is required to "examine" before issuance of a certificate of identity, also goes against the Supreme Court's stance in NALSA, which rejected such a requirement, adding that this violates the "right to bodily integrity and privacy" as enshrined in the Constitution.

By removing the guarantee of self-perceived identity, narrowing the definition of who qualifies as transgender, and introducing layers of medical and administrative scrutiny, transgender people, activists and allies, say that many will be erased and made invisible by the Bill.

Transgender rights activist resigns from NHRC body

Vinaya Deshpande Pandit
MUMBAI

Transgender rights activist Harish Iyer on Thursday resigned from the position of Advisor on the Core Group on LGBTQI+ issues at the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), in protest of the alleged failure of NHRC to stand for the LGBTQI+ community.

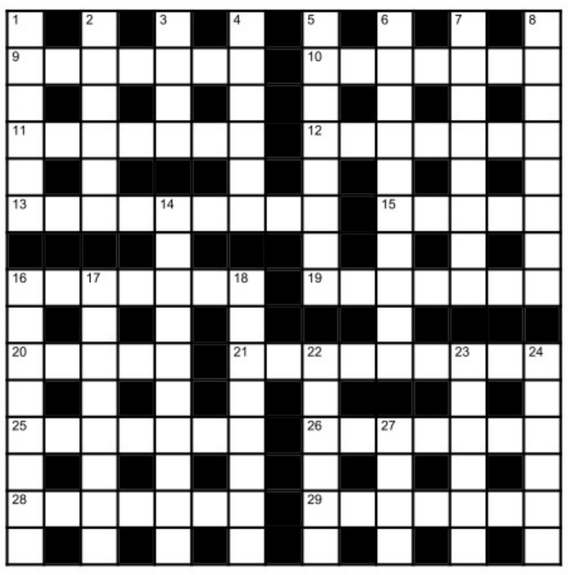
He slammed the government and NHRC for not consulting the core group on any of the key issues before passing the Transgender Persons Amendment Bill, 2026, calling his association with NHRC 'untenable'. "The NHRC cannot claim to be a "watchdog of human rights" while remaining perfectly content with this autocracy," the resignation letter has stated.

TH CROSSWORD + 14752

(set by Arden)

Solve this puzzle online and access more puzzles at *https://thehindu.com/crosswords*

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

9 Sharpen pen, show uprightness (7)
10 Simple Bridge convention - yet confusing for a follower (7)
11 A month before Masters, perhaps (7)
12 Choice before a politician on eloquence (7)
13 Old offensive - in the middle missing a skin eruption (9)
15 Finally, recommending for you - the usual thin porridge (5)
16 Spooner's broken sound - refuse to go in there (7)
19 Paints South African golfer's name inside (7)
20 Set boundaries on a quiet hoard of cash (5)
21 Gorgeous! Sun in India shining, but not at home (9)
25 US president accepts second time success (7)
26 A horse with fat flanks always trails behind (7)
28 Old-fashioned uniform - long for a solo dance (3,4)
29 Tesla to block representation by law (7)

Down

1 Expressed admiration for resistance (6)
2 Mystery of the war time code (6)
3 Terror outfit has even airships (4)
4 Layer after layer peeled by a primate (3-3)
5 Restriction on time for a title (8)
6 Also caring about an instrument (3,7)
7 Intend to take over Sony - it's getting all the attention (8)
8 About-turns and salvages (8)
14 Vociferous supporter expressing doubt over he and Trump running (3-7)
16 Counter toys with computers (8)
17 Spookiest foreign actress I got involved (8)
18 The counsel finally stopped hearing somehow and shouted "hooker!" (8)
22 Survival is easy with packed bag (6)
23 He was badly sun burnt in Greece once (6)
24 Contraption tagged wrongly (6)
27 Stick around a US island territory (4)

SUDOKU

		1	2					
			4	6	9			1
	4			8			5	
8							4	9
	1		7	4	2		8	
6	2							5
	7			5			2	
1			3	2	7			
					1	8		

No.SS6832 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Solution to previous puzzle

R	E	C	I	F	E		C	A	M	P	S	I	T	E
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Y	A	R	D	I	E		M	E	N	H	A	D	E	N
S		D		D		S		L		E		M		D
T	R	A	V	E	S	T	Y		S	T	R	O	M	A
I		I		N		E				I		S		T
C	E	N	O	T	A	P	H		S	C	Y	T	H	E

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

6	1	7	8	5	9	2	3	4
5	9	2	1	4	3	8	6	7
3	4	8	7	2	6	5	9	1
9	5	6	4	1	7	3	8	2
4	7	3	6	8	2	1	5	9
2	8	1	9	3	5	7	4	6
1	6	9	5	7	8	4	2	3
8	2	4	3	9	1	6	7	5
7	3	5	2	6	4	9	1	8

FAITH

Bhagavatam, a guiding light

Srimad Bhagavata Purana, composed by sage Veda Vyasa, illuminates the path of devotion (bhakti). It elaborates on the divine incarnations of Lord Vishnu and expounds the principles of dharma, devotion, and righteous living. While Saunaka and other rishis were performing a sacred yajna at Naimisaranyam, sage Suta Pauranika arrived there. The sages posed profound questions to him: "What grants human beings lasting strength and inner stability? What is the essential message of the scriptures as conveyed in the Bhagavata tradition? Why did Lord Krishna incarnate on earth? What divine leelas did He perform in Brindavan? What is the deeper spiritual purpose behind His various incarnations? And who protects dharma and safeguards devotees?"

The Bhagavatam itself provides answers to these questions. It declares that whenever adharma rises and dharma declines, the divine manifests to restore cosmic order. This truth is also affirmed by Lord Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 4, Verse 8 – *Parithranaya Sadhunam*). He incarnates age after age to protect the righteous, destroy the wicked, and re-establish dharma. Srimad Bhagavatam stands as the very essence of all sastras. Sri Kesava Vajapeya Swamy said in a discourse that we should not pray with the motive of seeking worldly gains for our personal satisfaction. God, in His wisdom, knows what to grant, how to grant, and when to grant. Srimad Bhagavatam serves as a guiding light for us, who are lost in the dense and dark forest of worldly life. Like a lighthouse that guides ships across the vast sea, it shows the right path to those seeking meaning and direction.

INBRIEF

SEBI reviewing HDFC Bank chairman's exit letter: sources

India's markets regulator has begun a preliminary review of the resignation letter of former HDFC Bank chairman Atanu Chakraborty for possible violations of rules governing directors of listed companies, two sources familiar with the matter said. Mr. Chakraborty told *Reuters* he was not aware of any examination by the regulator. In his resignation letter, Mr. Chakraborty cited "certain happenings and practices within the bank" that he said were "not in congruence" with his personal values and ethics. He did not elaborate. The letter triggered an 8.7% slide in the stock the following day and wiped $16.3 billion in market value over three sessions. REUTERS

Oil ministry assistance sought for mills facing LPG shortages

India's federal steel ministry has sought assistance from the oil ministry to ensure that steel plants are not affected by liquefied petroleum gas shortages, a source with direct knowledge of the matter told *Reuters* on Thursday. India, the world's second-biggest crude steel producer, is in the midst of its worst LPG supply crisis in decades as shipments from key producers in the Middle East have been disrupted because of the Iran war. "We have taken up with the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to see within the existing conditions what best can be done," the source said, "We are still under discussion." India's small steel producers have warned of production halts due to gas shortages, *Reuters* reported earlier. "If this LPG situation continues, it will not only impact margins but also affect jobs, future investments in value-added steel, and the confidence to commit to long-term contracts, both in India and overseas," said Vedant Goel, a director at Pune-based Enlight Metals.

India eyes local currency payments for West Asian oil

Move aimed at mitigating the fiscal double-hit of surging oil prices and a depreciating rupee, according to two senior officials; another objective is to save on currency conversion costs

T.C.A. Sharad Raghavan
NEW DELHI

The Centre is "experimenting" with conducting trade with the West Asian countries in local currencies, in a bid to mitigate the fiscal double-hit of surging oil prices and a depreciating rupee, according to two senior officials in the government. Another objective is to save on currency conversion costs.

If this fructifies, it would mean India would be paying for about 80% of its oil imports using local currencies rather than the U.S. dollar. "India is working out a mechanism to pay for imports from the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] countries in local currencies," a senior government official told *The Hindu*.

Triggers for alternatives

The triggers for this move, he explained, were the upward spiral of oil prices and the downward spiral of the rupee.

Cost cutting

With a local currency mechanism, India will see a drastic reduction in currency conversion charges, says an official

- Each conversion costs about 1-2% of the total transaction value
- About 5-6% will be saved if we just deal in local currencies
- India pays for Russian oil in a combination of local currencies and dirhams

The price of the Indian basket of oil – which is a weighted average of the prices of various types of oil from Oman and Dubai and of Brent crude – stands at $123.15 per barrel currently, as per government data. This is up from an average of $69 per barrel in February 2026.

Simultaneously, the rupee touched an all-time low of ₹94.1 against a dollar earlier this week, before settling slightly higher. The exchange rate was at about ₹91.3 per dollar before the Iran war broke out.

A combination of these two factors has meant that Indian importers have had to pay much more for each import transaction conducted in the U.S. dollar, especially for oil.

According to another official in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the other advantage India will see through such a local currency mechanism, is a drastic reduction in currency conversion charges.

"It is an experiment on which we are working," the second official said. "Primarily to save on the cost of currency conversion at several stages.

Each conversion costs about 1-2% of the total transaction value, and so about 5-6% will be saved if we just deal in local currencies, which is a lot when it comes to high value transactions," he added.

India currently already pays for Russian oil using a combination of local currencies and dirhams. Russia accounted for 30.4% of India's oil imports in the April 2025 to January 2026 period.

The GCC countries account for another 49%.

Moving away from using the dollar for such high value transactions might, however, attract American ire. The U.S. President Donald Trump has in the past threatened a 100% tariff on countries looking to adopt alternate currencies to the dollar.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision might have removed this threat, but Mr. Trump's determination to use tariffs as a compulsion tool remains.

FPIs sell a record ₹1.1 lakh crore in Indian equities as markets stay fragile

Ashokamithran T.
MUMBAI

This selling is the most aggressive FIIs made in a month and surpasses the ₹94,017 cr. sold in Oct. 2024

Foreign institutional investors (FII) sold ₹1,12,244 crore worth of Indian stocks this month as markets remain extremely exposed to oil price shocks, according to data from National Securities and Depositories Ltd. (NSDL).

This selling is the most aggressive FIIs have ever made in a month and surpasses the ₹94,017 crore sold in October 2024, which was seen as the beginning of the correction in the market. The relentless stock dumping comes at a time when markets have got a breather after signs of de-escalation and oil prices cooled for two days of the week. The selling is expected to show up in the benchmark indices on Friday, as markets remained closed on Thursday on the occasion of Ram Navami.

Apart from equities, FIIs also sold ₹1,398 crore in mutual funds. A large share of the selling was, however, in the debt category where they sold ₹335 crore. Equity MF sales were moderate at ₹142 crore. This has made it a broad sale, as FIIs had recently begun preferring passive investments in the Indian market.

Across all modes of investments, FPIs sold ₹1,23,688 crore in March and ₹1,15,124 crore between January and March 2026.

The March data is a complete reversal from the February trend when the foreign funds bought ₹22,615 crore in Indian stocks after which experts had signalled a sign of slow take-off citing better macroeconomic data.

Between March 1 and 15, the duration for which sector-wise data is available, FIIs sold ₹31,831 crore of stocks in financial services. The automobile sector came a close second wherein foreign funds sold over ₹4,807 crore worth of stocks.

Amid a broad sale, FIIs had bought stocks worth ₹3,897 crore in the capital goods sector and less than ₹1,000 crore worth shares in chemicals, consumer services and metals and mining. To be sure, the numbers might have changed in the past 15 days in the current month.

"Investors largely agreed on the improving macro and earnings outlook, but the main pushback was on a lack of compelling narrative or immediate reasons to buy. The Middle East conflict and India's high dependence on oil imports are likely to dent foreign investors' sentiment, in our view," BNP Paribas said in its March Strategy report.

Iron ore imports set to hit 7-year high

Reuters
NEW DELHI

India's imports of iron ore, a key raw material in steelmaking, are set to rise to a seven-year high in the fiscal year ending on March 31, driven by a shortage of high-grade ore and demand from JSW Steel, analysts and industry executives said.

Overall imports are likely to reach 12 million to 14 million metric tons in 2025-26, more than doubling from a year earlier, analysts and trade officials said. JSW Steel, India's biggest steelmaker by capacity, was a key driver of iron ore imports for its mills in the western state of Maharashtra and the southern state of Karnataka, said Lalit Ladkat, a senior analyst at London-based consultancy CRU.

A cargo of BHP's Jimblebar Fines iron ore is heading to India in a rare sale, driven by discounts on the product that was banned for sale in China, *Reuters* reported last week.

Cargo charge waiver to draw more crude, LPG tankers to Mangaluru

Anil Kumar Sastry
MANGALURU

With the New Mangalore Port Authority (NMPA) waiving cargo charges for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and crude oil tankers to attract vessels for tiding over geopolitical crisis in West Asia, more vessels are sailing into the port.

The NMPA waived the levies after the conflict hit supply of petroleum products to India, NMPA sources said.

For one lakh tonne crude, the charges come to about ₹34 lakh. Vessel-handling charges, however, continue to be collected. The port had waived ₹47 lakh cargo charges for LPG Tanker Pyxis Pioneer that discharged 16,700 tonne LPG on March 14.

LPG Tanker Apollo Ocean

LPG vessels line up

NMPA sources said at least five confirmed arrivals and four promised arrivals of LPG tankers at New Mangalore were expected by March-end. Apollo Ocean with about 17,000 tonne of LPG began discharging the load on Thursday even as Al Ain that left the King Fahad Industrial Port in Saudi Arabia on March 19, was likely to discharge 23,000 tonne LPG on Friday. This was an unscheduled arrival, sources noted.

Meanwhile, LPG Tanker Pine Gas that left Ghantoot Port in the UAE on March 3 with 45,000 tonne of LPG was expected to discharge 25,000 tonne in New Mangalore Port this week.

One more tanker was expected to discharge 25,000 tonne LPG on Friday or Saturday, sources said. Another tanker from the U.S. would bring 30,000 tonne of LPG for HPCL on March 30.

Meanwhile, an agent promised to bring in four more LPG tankers avail the cargo charge waiver.

The Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Ltd. (MRPL) continues to receive the crude off Mangaluru coast. It was likely to receive about 2.62 lakh tonne of crude in the next few days from West Africa and Saudi Arabia while it already received about 1.53 lakh tonne of crude oil.

More crude arrivals

Tanker Swarna Krishna that received 48,669 tonne of crude from floating storage Armada Sterling would arrive at NMP on March 27.

Popi P that left Al Muajjiz Port in Saudi Arabia on March 17 with 1.41 lakh tonne of crude would reach NMP on March 27. Sunriseway with 1.21 lakh tonne of Mandji crude may arrive March 29.

Nayara Energy hikes petrol, diesel prices

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

In the first signs of pressure on retail prices of fuel amid the escalating tensions in West Asia and its impact on fuel supplies, privately-owned oil marketing firm Nayara Energy on Thursday hiked prices of petrol and diesel at its pumps by ₹5 and ₹3 for every litre, respectively.

Prices of petrol at Nayara's pumps have been hiked by ₹5 to ₹105.71 a litre while diesel is expensive by ₹3 at ₹94.31 a litre.

In a statement, the refiner said escalating tensions in West Asia were "impacting fuel availability".

Abhishek Gupta, General Secretary, All-India Transporters' Welfare Association said private OMCs, including Nayara, were unable to cater to the increased demand coming from industrial customers, because of the hike in rates. This had led customers to public-sector oil marketing companies.

A worker stands at a fuel station of Nayara Energy.

Infosys to acquire two firms for ₹5,260 crore

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Infosys announced plans to acquire healthcare digital transformation firm Optimum Healthcare IT and insurance consulting technology firm Stratus, for a cumulative amount of about ₹5,260 crore.

Infosys will acquire Optimum Healthcare IT for up to $465 million, including upfront and earnouts, excluding management incentives and retention bonuses. The buyout is expected to close during the first quarter of fiscal 2027, subject to completion of closing conditions.

Headquartered in the U.S Stratus brings a team of 450-plus experts with deep industry knowledge, consulting excellence, and advanced technology capabilities, a release said.

With a global delivery footprint that spans across the U.S., Canada and India, Stratus delivers end-to-end Guidewire Insurance Suite capabilities, it added.

Infosys will acquire Optimum for up to $465 million.

MANAMA

U.S. sailor sustained 'non-combat injury' on *USS Abraham Lincoln*

AFP

An American sailor was injured aboard *USS Abraham Lincoln* in the Arabian Sea in a non-combat related incident, the U.S. Navy said on Thursday. "The aircraft carrier was conducting flight operations in the Arabian Sea. The injury is not combat-related nor life threatening," the Fifth Fleet said. AFP

PYONGYANG

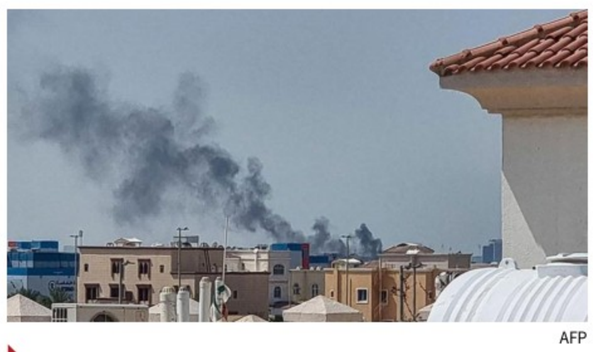
North Korea, Belarus leaders meet in Pyongyang, sign friendship pact

REUTERS

Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko and North Korean leader Kim Jong-un held talks in North Korea's capital on Thursday and signed a friendship and cooperation treaty. Mr. Lukashenko hailed the document as "fundamental," and said that relations between the two countries are "entering a new stage". AP

DUBAI

'Indian among two killed in UAE by debris of intercepted missiles'

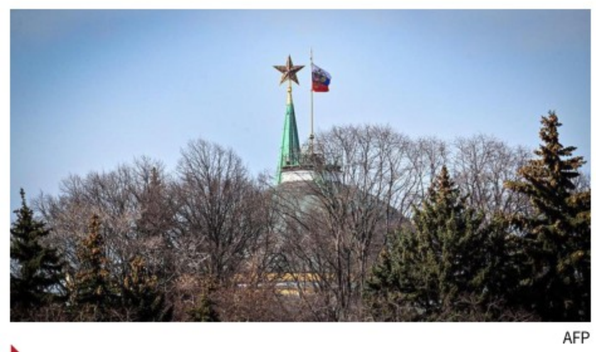


AFP

At least two persons, including an Indian, were killed and three others injured on Thursday when debris of missiles intercepted by the UAE's air defence system fell on a street in Abu Dhabi, local media reported. The second person killed in the incident is a Pakistani national, while the three injured also include an Indian. PTI

MOSCOW

Russian court bans Oscar-winning documentary from being streamed



AFP

A Russian court banned the Oscar-winning documentary *Mr Nobody Against Putin* from several streaming platforms, alleging it promoted "negative attitudes" about the Russian government and the war in Ukraine. It is the first known move to use the courts to restrict access to the film inside Russia. AFP

Iran and U.S. dig in heels as Tehran tightens its grip on Hormuz Strait

Iran and U.S. reject each other's negotiation proposals, raising risk of further escalation in West Asia; Iranian Parliament is working to formalise a plan to charge ships to pass through Hormuz; GCC says Tehran is already charging for safe passage

Associated Press
Agence France-Presse
DUBAI/ISLAMABAD/TEHRAN

Iran and the United States appeared at an impasse on Thursday, with each side hardening its position over talks and setting the stage for another potential escalation in the West Asia war. Thousands more U.S. troops neared the region, while Tehran tightened its grip on the crucial Strait of Hormuz.

Sirens over Israel warned of barrages of incoming Iranian missiles, and Gulf nations worked to intercept fire. Heavy strikes were reported in Iran's capital and other cities.

Retaliatory strike: Israeli security forces cordon off an area following a projectile strike on south Tel Aviv on Thursday. AFP

Short of a negotiated solution, the U.S. would need a dramatic escalation to end Iran's attacks and restore the free flow of goods through the strait, where 20% of all traded oil and natural gas is transported in peacetime. Iran rejected a ceasefire proposal put forth by the U.S., while putting forth its own demands.

President Donald Trump's envoy Steve Witkoff confirmed the U.S. has presented a 15-point "action list" to Iran, delivered through Pakistan as a framework for a possible peace deal. "If we can convince Iran that this is the inflection point, with no good alternatives for them other than more death and destruction ... We have strong signs that this is a possibility, and if a deal happens, it will be great for the country, for Iran and the entire region."

Iran has been blocking ships from the strait that it perceives as linked to the U.S. and Israeli war effort, while letting through a trickle of others.

Jasem Mohamed al-Budaiwi, secretary-general of the Gulf Cooperation Council, said Iran was charging for safe passage.

Iran's Fars and Tasnim news agencies quoted lawmaker Mohammadreza Rezaei Kouchi as saying that Parliament was working to formalise that process and that it was "natural" for ships to pay for it.

Lloyd's List Intelligence called it a "de facto 'toll booth' regime," saying that at least two vessels have paid in yuan, China's currency.

Katz says Iran Guards' navy commander killed in strike

Agence France-Presse
JERUSALEM

Defence Minister Israel Katz announced on Thursday that an Israeli air strike had killed Alireza Tangsiri, commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards' navy, and the country's naval intelligence chief, Behnam Rezaei.

"Last night, in a precise and lethal operation, the IDF eliminated the commander of the Revolutionary Guards' navy, Tangsiri, along with senior officers of the naval command," Mr. Katz said in a video statement.

"The man who was directly responsible for the terrorist operation of mining and blocking the Strait of Hormuz to shipping was blown up and eliminated," Mr. Katz said.

Alireza Tangsiri

Rezaei had "central knowledge authority in maritime intelligence," the Israeli military said.

Since the start of the joint U.S.-Israeli attacks on Iran on February 28, Israel has announced the killing of several top Iranian officials, including Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the Islamic republic's powerful security chief, Ali Larijani.

In recent days, Israeli forces have carried out several strikes targeting the naval assets of Iran.

Last week, Israeli air strikes hit several Iranian naval ships in the Caspian Sea, including ones equipped with missile systems, support vessels and patrol craft.

Surging crisis

Iran's grip on the Strait of Hormuz and relentless attacks on Gulf regional energy infrastructure have sent oil prices skyrocketing and concerns of a global energy crisis surging. Brent crude, the international standard, traded at $104 on Thursday, up more than 40% from February 28, when the war started.

Germany's Defence Minister Boris Pistorius called it a "catastrophe" for the world's economies.

China warns the U.S. against building arms facility in Philippines

Agence France-Presse
BEIJING

China warned the United States on Thursday against bringing "conflict and the chaos of war" to the Asia-Pacific, after Washington and its allies said they would weigh building a weapons base in the Philippines.

A U.S.-led intergovernmental defence group agreed last week to assess funding for a new ammunition assembly and production line in the Philippines, according to a joint statement. The decision was made by the 16 members of the Partnership for Indo-Pacific Industrial Resilience (PIPIR).

China's Foreign Ministry warned on Thursday that a potential ammunition facility would destabilise the region and "backfire".

"The U.S. and its allies should earnestly respect the common aspirations of regional countries... and refrain from introducing bloc confrontation, conflict and the chaos of war into the Asia-Pacific," Ministry spokesperson Lin Jian told a news conference.

Caged authority

Cocaine charges: A man holds a figure depicting kidnapped Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro, handcuffed and wearing an orange prison uniform, outside the court on the day Maduro is to attend a hearing in a narco-terrorism case, in New York City, on Thursday. REUTERS

Hezbollah rejects truce talks as Israel hammers Lebanon

Agence France-Presse
BEIRUT

Hezbollah chief Naim Qassem said negotiations with Israel under fire would amount to "surrender", as the Iran-backed group launched attacks and Israel said it was expanding a "buffer zone" inside Lebanon.

Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said the military had already "created a genuine security zone" and was now expanding it, pushing deeper into Lebanon.

Naim Qassem

Hezbollah issued dozens of statements claiming attacks on Israeli forces, and said it also launched missiles early on Thursday at military sites in central Israel, where air raid sirens sounded.

Panel seeks prosecution of Oli over Gen Z protest killings

Sanjeev Satgainya
KATHMANDU

A commission set up to investigate Nepal's Gen Z protests in September last year – and the subsequent violence – has recommended action against then-Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli and other senior officials.

The report of the commission, led by former judge Gauri Bahadur Karki, has yet to be officially released. But the leaked report, seen by *The Hindu*, recommends that Mr. Oli be investigated and prosecuted for "reckless" and "negligent killings" for failing to stop lethal firing on September 8.

At least 19 youth were killed in police firing on September 8, the first day of protests called by Nepali youth demanding an end to corruption and the establishment of clean governance and accountability.

The protests led to the fall of the Oli government.

At least 76 people were killed and 2,522 injured during the two-day Gen Z protests, the commission report says, though the government had earlier put the death toll at 77.

On Mr. Oli's role, the commission's 907-page report, which is in Nepali, says, "It is a major weakness on the part of the Prime Minister, who bears the responsibility of being the guardian of all citizens of the state, to fail to make efforts to prevent further loss of life even as gunfire continued for nearly four hours outside the Parliament building, despite some deaths and hundreds of injuries."

The commission has also recommended that then-Home Minister Ramesh Lekhak be prosecuted for administrative negligence and failure to prevent casualties.

Protesters at the Singha Durbar, the seat of Nepal's government's Ministries and offices after it was set on fire in September 2025. AP

It has further recommended that then-Nepal Police chief Chandra Kuber Khapung be prosecuted for ordering the use of force without waiting for specific authorisation.

The report's sudden leak, just two days before Balendra Shah's oath as Prime Minister, has baffled many. There had been growing calls for the government to make the report public. Some youth had been protesting at Maitighar – where the Gen Z protests began on September 8 – to pressure the government to release it.

If prosecuted and found guilty, Oli, Lekhak and Khapung could face up to 10 years in jail

The commission submitted the report to the government on March 8.

If prosecuted as per the commission's recommendations and found guilty by a court, all three – Mr. Oli, Mr. Lekhak and Mr. Khapung – could face up to 10 years in jail.

Legal experts, however, say the commission's recommendations are not enough.

"It's just recommendations... and the government must first initiate criminal investigations based on them before formal charges can be filed in court," said Bipin Adhikari, professor of law at the Kathmandu University School of Law. "Recommendations do not necessarily mean established facts; they need to be thoroughly investigated first."

Mr. Adhikari also expressed concern about the possible fallout of the sudden leak of the report, at a time when the government had made it clear it was studying it.

"The timing of the leak raises many questions, as the current interim government is about to hand over power to a newly elected government," he said. "Despite a strong political mandate, the incoming government will now face the challenge of how to proceed."

Following the fall of the Oli government, an interim government led by former Chief Justice Sushila Karki was formed on September 12. It dissolved Parliament and announced elections for March 5.

Mr. Oli, 74, chairman of the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist), suffered defeat at the hands of Mr. Shah of the Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP), which swept the elections with close to a two-thirds majority.

Thirty-five-year-old Shah, a rapper-turned-politician, is set to take oath as Nepal's new Prime Minister on Friday.

सेन्ट्रल माईन प्लानिंग एण्ड डिजाईन इन्स्टीच्यूट लिमिटेड
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E-TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP Portal only)

BESCOM invites Request For Proposal (RFP) vide **Tender No.:BESCOM/2025-26/SE0446** for **"Selection of Solar Power Generators (SPGs) on the basis of Build, Own & Operate (BOO) for Design, Survey, Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Operation & Maintenance of grid connected distributed solar power plants for solarization of Sub-Station (SS) of capacity 1500MW (approximately) in BESCOM jurisdiction, its associated 11kV line to connect the plant with concerned SS and Remote Monitoring System (RMS) of solar power plants through RESCO mode, for 25 years under Mukhya Manthri Soura Krishi Yojane (CM-SKY) scheme".** The bid documents will be available **on or after 06.04.2026 in https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.** The prospective bidders have to register on the bidding portal. For any queries regarding portal, please contact KPPP helpdesk no.:080-46010000, 080-68948777 or e-mail: support@eprochelpdesk.com.

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A BG-BGE

SOLID PAIR

Skipper Ruturaj reveals he will open the batting with Samson

FILE PHOTO: SHIV KUMAR PUSHPAKAR

Chennai Super Kings skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad revealed that he will open the batting with wicketkeeper Sanju Samson in the Indian Premier League 2026 season. Reacting to a question about CSK's opening pair on the sidelines of the IPL captains' meeting in Mumbai on Wednesday, Ruturaj said, "Rutu and Sanju".

PERSONAL CHOICE

Don't think there should be Impact Player rule in IPL: Gill

VIJAY SONEJI

Personally, I don't think that there should be an Impact Player in the game. Cricket, to me, is an 11-player sport. On the kinds of pitches and grounds which we play on, adding an extra batter takes away the skills — Gujarat Titans skipper Shubman Gill on the existing rule in the Indian Premier League.

UNCHARTED TERRITORY

IPL presents a big challenge for KKR head coach Nayar: Chopra

PTI

Former India opener Aakash Chopra said KKR's new head coach Abhishek Nayar has prior experience as an assistant and batting coach but IPL 2026 presents a big challenge as this is his first major leadership role. Chopra said KKR will need sharp tactics to succeed, especially given a bowling attack that appears weak.

SHOT IN THE ARM

Pacer Hazlewood joins the RCB camp ahead of new season

X@RCBTWEETS

Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood joined the RCB camp on Thursday ahead of IPL 2026. "The Myth. The Legend. The HazleGOD. Back in Red, Blue, and Gold. Back to BLR. Just where he truly belongs. Bengaluru, our star has returned," the franchise posted on social media. He had missed the recent T20 World Cup owing to injury.

Sixth sense and the 12 influencers

The dozen: Samson, Jaiswal, Kohli, Pooran, Head, Hetmyer, Bumrah, Varun, Chahal, Rashid, Boult and Ngidi.

Sankar Narayanan E.H.

History warns us of the paradox of choice and we are often reminded that an overabundance of excellent options is its own kind of prison. The task of choosing six batters and as many bowlers from the embarrassment of riches available in IPL 2026 proved a daunting task.

Statistical stalemates were inevitable in a landscape full of world-beaters, which meant that the final 12-member list was driven by sixth sense.

Sanju Samson (CSK): The elegance with which he wields the bat has made him a perennial favourite for the 'People's Choice Award'. The 31-year-old artist, who delivered a masterpiece at the ICC T20 World Cup and won the Lead Actor honours, is primed to extend his purple patch in Chennai's Yellow.

Yashasvi Jaiswal (RR): The dashing southpaw has the X-factor to edge ahead in the overcrowded race for a national call-up and a Royal show in the IPL could well trigger it for the 24-year-old batter.

Virat Kohli (RCB): The only batter to score more than 2,000 runs (2,037 runs at an average of 56.58 and strike-rate of 146.54) since the start of IPL 2023, the 37-year-old maestro has not slowed down one bit though T20 batting has gathered pace over the years. Royal Challengers can be upbeat knowing that The King will lead the charge in defending the crown.

Nicholas Pooran (LSG): Since the start of 2024, the Caribbean T20 specialist has smashed 4,671 runs (158 innings at a strike-rate of 155.18) in T20s. The next best (James Vince's 3,801) puts things in perspective on why the explosive left-hander is one of the most sought-after commodities in franchise cricket.

Travis Head (SRH): Mr. Destruction strikes at a blistering 170.03 in the IPL. With 834 of his 1,146 runs coming through boundaries (126x4, 55x6), a 30-minute dose of the 32-year-old Australian's fifth-gear batting will be enough to put Sunrisers in the driver's seat.

Shimron Hetmyer (RR): The confidence gained from acing the No. 3 role in West Indies colours during the T20 World Cup (248 runs at a strike-rate of 186.47) should help him regain his mojo after a couple of quiet IPL seasons.

Jasprit Bumrah (MI): The peerless India pacer's selection was the most, and perhaps the only, easy one as he is the world's best bowler by a country mile.

Varun Chakaravarthy (KKR): Though the unorthodox spinner finished as the joint top wicket-taker (14) in the T20 World Cup, his economy rate took a beating (9.25 runs per over). He has enough weapons in his arsenal to make a turnaround.

Yuzvendra Chahal (PBKS): He is the most prolific bowler in the league's history (221 wickets). With 174 IPL caps, the veteran leg-spinner has the numbers and guile to throw his hat in the ring for an India call-up again.

Rashid Khan (GT): The spell the Afghan cast over the willow-wielders in the IPL has begun to fade. The leg-spinner had a higher-than-usual economy of 8.93 over the last two seasons and only 19 wickets in 27 matches during that period. But, he has the wherewithal to set the record straight.

Trent Boult (MI): The Kiwi left-arm pacer has the premium quality of scalping wickets in the PowerPlay. With 72 of his 143 victims coming in the first six overs, Boult is the second-most lethal IPL bowler in the PowerPlay (only behind Bhuvneshwar Kumar, 80 wickets).

Lungi Ngidi (DC): He may not even get to feature in all matches if pace ace Mitchell Starc receives his NOC from Cricket Australia. However, the control and accuracy with which he dished out his loopy slower balls and yorkers against India in the T20 World Cup should be proof enough that he is more than just a back-up option.

Super Kings eager to recapture their glory

The five-time champion has the firepower to rack up mammoth totals; Samson's addition a big boost for the Chennai outfit; bowling, however, remains an area of concern for the Yellow Brigade

S. Dipak Ragav

Fairytale ending? CSK talisman Dhoni would be eyeing a record sixth title in what could well be his farewell season. R. RAGU

When you are at the bottom, the only way is up. That could well be Chennai Super Kings' mantra for the 2026 season. The five-time champion slipped into an abyss last season when it won just four games and had the ignominy of finishing with the wooden spoon for the first time.

The major problem was that it lacked the batting firepower to keep pace with its rivals, who had all pushed the game forward through their fearless approach and posted imposing totals.

Midway through the campaign, CSK course-corrected by drafting in promising youngsters like Dewald Brevis, Ayush Mhatre and Urvil Patel as injury replacements, who now form a formidable core.

A more emphatic indication of that shift came during the off-season when it pulled off one of the biggest deals by signing Sanju Samson from Rajasthan Royals.

At the mini-auction, Super Kings, armed with a hefty purse, further splurged on two young uncapped Indian players – Prashant Veer and Kartik Sharma – known for their power-hitting.

If the pitch at Chepauk resembles the featherbeds that were dished out during the recent ICC T20 World Cup, expect some mammoth totals from the Yellow Brigade.

Prashant and Kartik... waiting to make a statement. R. RAGU

While the Chennai outfit has bolstered its batting, its bowling is an area of concern. Last year, only Noor Ahmad and Khaleel Ahmed delivered with the ball, and a lot depends on them again.

To make matters worse, pacer Nathan Ellis was ruled out a week ago. The Australian was expected to be the crucial component during the death overs, especially after Sri Lanka speedster Matheesha Pathirana was released. Spencer Johnson, Ellis' replacement, is returning from a long layoff and is expected to join only by April 21.

The Dhoni factor

How and where M.S. Dhoni fits into the CSK equation is a key aspect. The 44-year-old can bat just a few overs, but the experience he brings in remains vital for skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad, who is still finding his feet.

Interesting days ahead

It will be interesting to see how the legend goes about his business in what could well be his farewell season.

Sport is replete with examples of storied franchises stuck in a rut and basking in past glory.

Super Kings enter the 19th edition in unfamiliar territory after having failed to qualify for the playoffs in two consecutive editions – a first in their decorated history – and would want to bring cheer to their legion of fans by winning a record sixth title.

IPL-19 COUNTDOWN

Chennai Super Kings

OVERALL NUMBERS

M	W	L	NR
253	142	109	2

BY OPPONENT

	M	W	L	NR
DC	31	**19**	12	0
GT	8	**4**	4	0
KKR	31	**20**	11	0
LSG	6	**2**	3	1
MI	39	**18**	21	0
PBKS	32	**16**	16	0
RCB	35	**21**	13	1
RR	31	**16**	15	0
SRH	22	**15**	7	0

Super Kings' remaining matches were against Deccan Chargers (10), PWI (6) and KTK (2)

CHAMPION
2010 | 2011
2018 | 2021
2023

CSK's 2026 LEAGUE CAMPAIGN

March 30	vs. RR	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
April 3	vs. PBKS	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 5	vs. RCB	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 11	vs. DC	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 14	vs. KKR	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 18	vs. SRH	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 23	vs. MI	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 26	vs. GT	Ahmedabad	3.30 p.m.
May 2	vs. MI	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
May 5	vs. DC	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
May 10	vs. LSG	Chennai	3.30 p.m.
May 15	vs. LSG	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
May 18	vs. SRH	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
May 21	vs. GT	Chennai	7.30 p.m.

SHIVAM DUBE

THE SQUAD

Ruturaj Gaikwad (Capt.), M.S. Dhoni (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Dewald Brevis, Ayush Mhatre, Kartik Sharma (wk), Urvil Patel (wk), Shivam Dube, Khaleel Ahmed, Mukesh Choudhary, Shreyas Gopal, Gurjapneet Singh, Sarfaraz Khan, Anshul Kamboj, Aman Khan, Ramakrishna Ghosh, Prashant Veer, Rahul Chahar, Noor Ahmad, Jamie Overton, Matthew Short, Zak Foulkes, Akeal Hosein, Matt Henry, and Spencer Johnson.

MIRACLE MAN

Shivam Dube: The all-rounder could not match the high standards he had set for himself in the previous two editions. Dube, however, struck a purple patch later, playing a crucial role in India's Asia Cup and T20 World Cup triumphs. He holds the key in the middle-order alongside Dewald Brevis. The 32-year-old has improved his bowling in recent times, and if he can deliver a few quiet overs, it would make life easier for skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad.

COMPILED BY **G. PRASAD & S. DIPAK RAGAV**

Date	Teams	Venue	Time
March 28	RCB vs. SRH	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
March 29	MI vs. KKR	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
March 30	RR vs. CSK	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
March 31	PBKS vs. GT	New Chandigarh	7.30 p.m.
April 1	LSG vs. DC	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 2	KKR vs. SRH	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
April 3	CSK vs. PBKS	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 4	DC vs. MI	Delhi	3.30 p.m.
April 4	GT vs. RR	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
April 5	SRH vs. LSG	Hyderabad	3.30 p.m.
April 5	RCB vs. CSK	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 6	KKR vs. PBKS	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
April 7	RR vs. MI	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
April 8	DC vs. GT	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
April 9	KKR vs. LSG	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
April 10	RR vs. RCB	Guwahati	7.30 p.m.
April 11	PBKS vs. SRH	New Chandigarh	3.30 p.m.
April 11	CSK vs. DC	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 12	LSG vs. GT	Lucknow	3.30 p.m.
April 12	MI vs. RCB	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 13	SRH vs. RR	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 14	CSK vs. KKR	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
April 15	RCB vs. LSG	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 16	MI vs. PBKS	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 17	GT vs. KKR	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
April 18	RCB vs. DC	Bengaluru	3.30 p.m.
April 18	SRH vs. CSK	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 19	KKR vs. RR	Kolkata	3.30 p.m.
April 19	PBKS vs. LSG	New Chandigarh	7.30 p.m.
April 20	GT vs. MI	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
April 21	SRH vs. DC	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
April 22	LSG vs. RR	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 23	MI vs. CSK	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 24	RCB vs. GT	Bengaluru	7.30 p.m.
April 25	DC vs. PBKS	Delhi	3.30 p.m.
April 25	RR vs. SRH	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
April 26	GT vs. CSK	Ahmedabad	3.30 p.m.
April 26	LSG vs. KKR	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
April 27	DC vs. RCB	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
April 28	PBKS vs. RR	New Chandigarh	7.30 p.m.
April 29	MI vs. SRH	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
April 30	GT vs. RCB	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
May 1	RR vs. DC	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
May 2	CSK vs. MI	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
May 3	SRH vs. KKR	Hyderabad	3.30 p.m.
May 3	GT vs. PBKS	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
May 4	MI vs. LSG	Mumbai	7.30 p.m.
May 5	DC vs. CSK	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
May 6	SRH vs. PBKS	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 7	LSG vs. RCB	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
May 8	DC vs. KKR	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
May 9	RR vs. GT	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
May 10	CSK vs. LSG	Chennai	3.30 p.m.
May 10	RCB vs. MI	Raipur	7.30 p.m.
May 11	PBKS vs. DC	Dharamshala	7.30 p.m.
May 12	GT vs. SRH	Ahmedabad	7.30 p.m.
May 13	RCB vs. KKR	Raipur	7.30 p.m.
May 14	PBKS vs. MI	Dharamshala	7.30 p.m.
May 15	LSG vs. CSK	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
May 16	KKR vs. GT	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
May 17	PBKS vs. RCB	Dharamshala	3.30 p.m.
May 17	DC vs. RR	Delhi	7.30 p.m.
May 18	CSK vs. SRH	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
May 19	RR vs. LSG	Jaipur	7.30 p.m.
May 20	KKR vs. MI	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.
May 21	CSK vs. GT	Chennai	7.30 p.m.
May 22	SRH vs. RCB	Hyderabad	7.30 p.m.
May 23	LSG vs. PBKS	Lucknow	7.30 p.m.
May 24	MI vs. RR	Mumbai	3.30 p.m.
May 24	KKR vs. DC	Kolkata	7.30 p.m.

INBRIEF

Top seeds Chikitha-Rajat in compound mixed team final

Chikitha Taniparthi, *left*, and Rajat Chauhan, *right*, reached the compound mixed team final to secure another medal for India at the Asia Cup Stage-1 archery in Bangkok on Thursday. The top-seeded pair of Chikitha and Rajat got a first-round bye before putting it across Chinese Taipei 159-155 and Kazakhstan 157-153 to set up a summit clash with Malaysia. India's recurve mixed team of Ridhi Phor and Devaang Gupta, got a first-round bye before losing 0-6 to Vietnam.

Bangalore summer season to start on May 1

The Bangalore Turf Club will start the summer season on May 1 (Friday), with 28 days of races, and will conclude on July 31 (Friday). The Zavary S. Poonawalla Bangalore Summer Derby will be held on July 12 (Sunday).

The racing dates: May: 1, 3, 9 and 10, 16 and 17, 23 and 24, 30 and 31; **June:** 6 and 7; 13 and 14, 20 and 21, 27 and 28; **July**: 4 and 5, 11 and 12, 18 and 19, 25 and 26, 30 and 31.

IOC re-introduces gender testing for 2028 Olympics

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) said on Thursday that it will be re-introducing genetic testing for gender to determine eligibility for "any female category event", beginning with the 2028 Los Angeles Games.

LIVE TELECAST

Football: Friendlies, Sony Sports Ten 1, 3 & LIV, 11.45 a.m, 2 p.m., 8.30 p.m., 10.30 p.m., 12.30 a.m. & 1.15 a.m. (Saturday).
Golf: Indian Open, Sony Sports Ten 2 & LIV, 1 p.m.

'Roads', rule change and record-shattering batters

Uber-aggressive approach, adopted by teams from the start, puts the bowlers under pressure; injuries and unavailability of key players force some sides to go in for a batting-heavy strategy

On the attack: Priyansh's ultra-aggressive ways provided flying starts to Punjab Kings in IPL 2025. FILE PHOTO: R.V. MOORTHY

IPL-19

S. Shrivathsan

The Indian Premier League has turned into a boundary-hitting exhibition in recent years with fielders becoming spectators and spectators becoming fielders.

Flat surfaces, which are often described as 'roads' in this part of the world, short boundaries across venues and use of the much-debated Impact Player rule are allowing the batters to be uber-aggressive from the get-go.

Since the pitches are largely demon-free for the willow-wielders and offer little hope for the bowlers, the fielding teams are forced to look to the heavens to avoid being sent on a leather hunt. But their prayers were hardly answered in the 2025 and 2024 IPL seasons as the 200-run mark was breached 52 and 41 times respectively.

The trend of high-scoring matches could well continue in the upcoming edition if glimpses from the intra-squad games are anything to go by.

Certain factors help us understand why teams are inclined towards beefing up their batting units and outbatting their opponents.

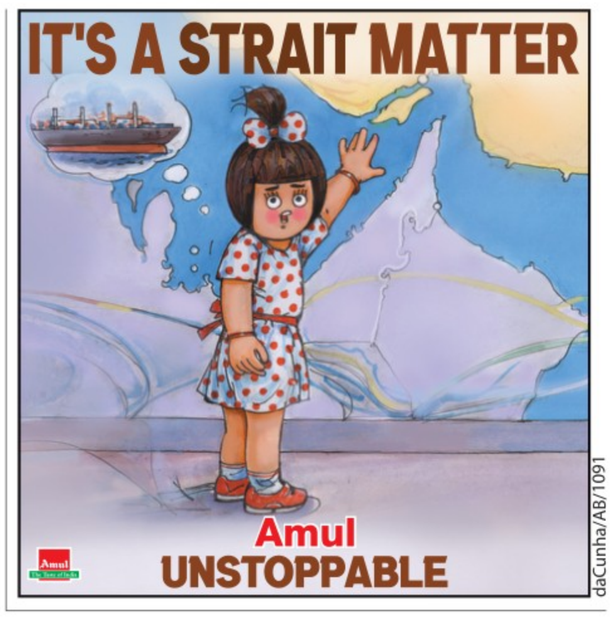
There is a depletion of top-quality bowling resources in sides like Sunrisers Hyderabad, Kolkata Knight Riders, Chennai Super Kings and Lucknow Super Giants, who have been hamstrung by injuries and unavailability of some key players.

But veteran South African batter Faf du Plessis opined that over-reliance on one wing to win games could prove to be "dangerous" in a closely-contested tournament.

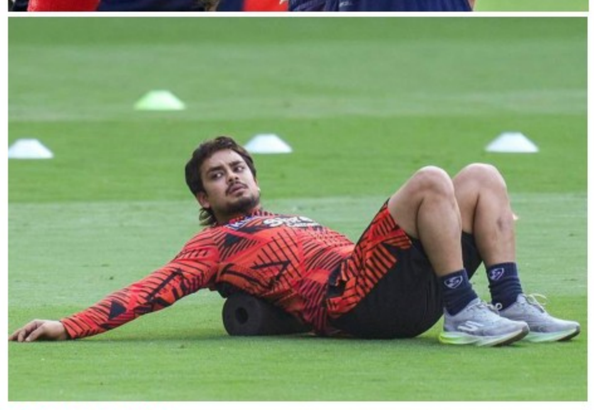
While analysing the SRH squad on *ESPNCricinfo*, du Plessis said: "There was one season when Sunrisers shot the lights out (2024). Last year was not the same, in terms of batting returns. It tried the same template, but the pitches were not as flat [as the previous season]. It did not do well as a batting department. I get that you should make one thing your strength, but it would be too many eggs in one basket. You are asking a lot from the batters."

The fearlessness of next-gen batters is also permitting the teams to operate at full throttle. Form and reputation go out of the window when they are in the thick of things.

Punjab Kings opener Priyansh Arya's approach is a case in point - in IPL 2025, the uncapped southpaw did not shy away from taking the aerial route against CSK left-arm pacer Khaleel Ahmed off the very first ball, despite being dismissed for a golden duck in the previous game. More such bold calls that lead to run fests may be in store.



All set for the face-off



Ready to rumble: The in-form Jacob Bethell and talismanic Virat Kohli could be the key to RCB's chances while SRH stand-in skipper Ishan Kishan will look to lead from the front. K. MURALI KUMAR

In the van: Schott kept his nose in front on a challenging day. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

Schott tops leaderboard on opening day

GOLF

Uthra Ganesan
GURUGRAM

German youngster Freddy Schott took control of the course and the honours on day one, firing home a six-under 66 to top the leaderboard at the Hero Indian Open here on Thursday.

Defending champion Eugenio Chacarra was one shot behind on a day that saw most of the fancied names struggle with a course at the DLF Golf and Country Club often considered one of the toughest on the DP World Tour.

With the weather changing throughout the day going from cool and breezy to hot and muggy and back to pleasant towards the end, Chacarra and Schott raced against the fading light. Schott had a bogey-free round till the 13th gaining strokes with six birdies before dropping a shot for the first time on the treacherous 14th - a hole that had an incredible 90 players dropping one or more shots.

He birdied the next one, dropped again on 17th and then, pushed by Chacarra who had caught up with a birdie on the final hole, proved he was up to the challenge with a birdie of his own to go into sole lead. Chacarra, on the other hand, started tentatively with a mixed bag on the front nine but picked up pace on the back.

Meanwhile, Akshay Bhatia had a torrid time in the morning session.

Starting from the 10th, Bhatia sent the ball out of bounds in the very first hole for a double bogey, then hit the wrong ball on the 15th for a two-stroke penalty to make the turn at eight-over 44. He made up with a more cautious outing on his back nine to finish with a five-over 77.

Last year's runner-up Veer Ahlawat was the best-placed Indian with a birdie on the 18th – his sixth for the day – to finish on even par 72.

Top scores: 66: Freddy Schott (Ger); 67: Eugenio Chacarra (Esp); 68: Dan Bradbury(Eng); 69: Niklas Norgaard (Den), Martin Couvra (Fra), Calum Hill (Sco), Gregorio De Leo (Ita), 70: Kiradech Aphibarnrat (Tha), Jorge Campillo (Esp), James Morrison (Eng), Grant Forrest (Sco), Alex Fitzpatrick (Eng), Quim Vidal (Esp), Matthew Jordan (Eng), Ewen Ferguson (Sco), Davis Bryant (USA); 71: Ryan Peake (Aus), Kota Kaneko (Jpn), Ivan Cantero (Esp), Euan Walker (Sco), Ugo Coussaud (Fra), Kazuma Kobori (NZ), David Law (Sco), Manuel Elvira (Esp), Jordan Gumberg (USA)Jacob Olesen (Den), Yurav Premlall (RSA), Jens Dantorp (Swe), Ross Fisher (Eng), MJ Daffue (RSA).

Chinnaswamy Stadium to host two international games as BCCI announces home schedule

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

The M. Chinnaswamy Stadium and Bengaluru will return to hosting international cricket matches, ending a long wait on the bench.

The iconic venue will host two fixtures – India vs. West Indies fifth T20I (October 17) and the second India-Sri Lanka ODI (December 16) – in the upcoming 2026-27 senior men's international home season.

The city last hosted an international outing in October 2024, when India took on New Zealand in a Test. The stadium fell out of favour after 11 lives were lost during RCB's title-winning celebrations in June last year.

Guwahati, which hosted its maiden Test in November last year, will stage the third Test against Australia next year. Nagpur, Chennai, Ranchi and Ahmedabad will host the other Test of this marquee series.

The schedule: Against West Indies: ODIs: Sept. 27 (Thiruvananthapuram), Sept. 30 (Guwahati) and Oct. 3 (New Chandigarh). *All matches begin at 2 p.m.*
T20Is: Oct. 6 (Lucknow), Oct. 9 (Ranchi), Oct. 11 (Indore), Oct. 14 (Hyderabad) and Oct. 17 (Bengaluru). *All matches begin at 7 p.m.*
Against Sri Lanka:
ODIs: Dec. 13 (Delhi), Dec. 16 (Bengaluru) and Dec. 19 (Ahmedabad). *All matches start at 2 p.m.*
T20Is: Dec. 22 (Rajkot), Dec. 24 (Cuttack) and Dec. 27 (Pune). *All matches begin at 7 p.m.*
Against Zimbabwe: ODIs: Jan. 3 (Kolkata), Jan. 6 (Hyderabad) and Jan. 9 (Mumbai). *All matches start at 2 p.m.*
Against Australia:
Tests: Jan. 21 to 25 (Nagpur), Jan. 29 to Feb. 2 (Chennai), Feb. 11 to 15 (Guwahati), Feb. 19 to 23 (Ranchi) and Feb. 27 to March 3 (Ahmedabad). *All matches barring the Guwahati Test to start at 9.30 a.m.* Third Test to begin at 9 a.m.

Pep Munoz named BFC head coach

ISL

Sports Bureau
BENGALURU

Bengaluru FC, on Thursday, announced the appointment of Spaniard Pep Munoz as the club's new head coach. The 42-year-old has signed a contract that will run until the end of the 2026-27 season, and will take charge ahead of the Indian Super League (ISL) fixture against FC Goa on April 4.

This season, BFC was coached by former India international Renedy Singh, who was previous coach Gerard Zaragoza's deputy and had taken over after the Spaniard left in 2025. The outfit is currently fifth in the ISL table with 11 points, but only three points off the top.

Munoz has previously worked within FC Barcelona's youth setup, and has also spent time coaching in China and Cambodia.

"The decision to join Bengaluru FC was an easy one for me," a media release quoted Munoz as saying.

Munoz.

"I have only heard very positive things about the club, the city and the supporters from my Spanish compatriots who have been or are in India."

BFC owner Parth Jindal stated that Munoz was the right man for the job.

"From our conversations with him, it was clear that he understands what this club stands for – hard work, humility, and a deep connection with our supporters," he said.

"I would also like to acknowledge Renedy for everything he has done and we are delighted that he will continue to play an important role within the BFC family," Jindal added.

ROUND-UP

Chikkamagaluru District hoopsters have it easy
BENGALURU:
Chikkamagaluru District outplayed Cincinatics BC 66-15 in a boys' match at the State junior basketball championship on Thursday. In a girls' category game, DYES Vidyanagar defeated Koramangala SC 37-15.

Shantinagar routs Gandhinagar
Shantinagar routed Gandhinagar 8-0 in the KSFA-Vaishnavi Chief Minister Cup football tournament on Thursday. In another match, C.V. Raman Nagar hammered BTM Layout 8-1.

State under-20 football trials
The Karnataka State Football Association will conduct trials on March 30 and 31 at the Bangalore Football Stadium to select the State team for the Swami Vivekananda under-20 Men's National Football Championship. Those born between January 1, 2007, and December 31, 2009, are eligible. For details, call: M. Kumar (98808 66657 / 72040 66657).

Spanish legend Marin retires at 32 due to knee injury

BADMINTON

Reuters
MADRID

Three-time World champion and former Olympic gold medallist Carolina Marin, who had to pull out of her semifinal at the Paris Games due to a knee injury, announced her retirement on Thursday.

The 32-year-old Spaniard had planned to return to competition at the European Championships in her birthplace Huelva next month.

"I'd have liked for us to see each other one last time on court, but I don't want to put my body at risk for that," Marin said in a video on Instagram.

Abrupt end: The injury sustained in the Paris Olympics semifinal cut short Marin's career. GETTY IMAGES

"Deep down, I did retire on court, in Paris in 2024. We just didn't know it at the time."

Marin won the World Championships in 2014, 2015 and 2018, and beat India's P.V. Sindhu in the 2016 final to become the first non-Asian to win the Olympic gold medal in women's singles.

"Marin has enjoyed a unique career, marked by success, ambition and a determination to excel that has inspired entire generations," the Spanish Badminton Federation said in a statement.

Final phase of football World Cup ticket sales to open on April 1

Agence France-Presse
WASHINGTON

The fourth and final ticket sales phase for the 2026 World Cup will open on April 1, FIFA announced on Wednesday, without specifying how many tickets will be made available.

The "last-minute" sales phase will then remain open through the end of the tournament, which runs from June 11 to July 19. Tickets will be sold on a first-come-first-served basis and be "released for sale on a rolling basis, including, on occasion, for matches taking place on the same day".

Benfica fined €40,000

Associated Press
NYON

Benfica was fined €40,000 by the UEFA for racist abuse by fans at a Champions League game against Real Madrid, whose forward Vinicius Junior was allegedly racially abused by Gianluca Prestianni. The verdict on a charge against Benfica for fans' misconduct was published.